

Administration of
Bengal (1875-76)

1877

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ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL, 1875-76.

MINUTE BY THE LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL.

Dated 5th January 1877.

WHEN presenting the report of the administration of the provinces under the Government of Bengal during the year 1875-76, being the second year of my own incumbency, I have to record some prefatory remarks. Having prefixed to the report of the preceding year a general sketch of the circumstances of the country, I need now only select those points which seem to require comment. On this, as on the last annual occasion, my comments will have special reference to the condition and sentiments of the people, and will be made in the same order as that prescribed for the subjects in the Administration Report itself. In my previous Minute every matter then known to me was mentioned. There is no need that this should be undertaken in the present Minute, which will be devoted, not to general description, but to selected points of observation.

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I. General Administration.

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the senior ranks of the Covenanted Civil Service there is a very large proportion of officers possessing not only experience, but also talent and capacity of the best order. Seldom, the local Government be surrounded by a body of stronger men than the Government of Bengal at some time past. In the junior ranks, also, prevails a devoted sense of duty. If ever there has been a danger lest the tendencies of the age should deaden



the young men take in the country where it is so hot to labour, then I must say there is no sign of this in the rising officers of the Civil Service. Nothing can exceed the animation and alacrity with which they bend their thoughts towards the work before them, identifying their ambition with the welfare of the people under their care.

During the year under review the condition and prospects of the Civil Service in respect to promotion have been much considered. Though there is very much less ground of complaint in these provinces than in the North-Western Provinces, still among the officers of a standing from seven to fourteen years there is some depression, which it is feared may increase and extend in the future unless some remedy can be applied. Accordingly the measures which Her Majesty's Government have, on the recommendation of the Government of India, sanctioned for the North-Western Provinces are under consideration as regards Bengal, namely—

- the grant to military officers in civil employ of certain pecuniary inducements to retire :

- the grant to Civil Servants who have not completed twenty-one years' residence in India, but who have completed twenty years' service or more, of a pension proportionate to the length of their actual residence :

- the grant of personal allowances to any Civil Servants who may be shown to have suffered unduly and extraordinarily from slowness of promotion :

- the possible formation of additional districts in places where the present district jurisdictions are excessive in size.

I have submitted to the Government of India detailed proposals for forming four additional districts in Bengal proper, a measure which would afford considerable promotion to that section of the Civil Service where it is most needed, as well as conduce to administrative efficiency, and localize executive power.

Under the rules promulgated by the Government of India with the sanction of Her Majesty's Government, and in obedience to instructions received, I have nominated, for appointments ordinarily reserved for Civil Servants, two Native officers of high standing, good experience, and excellent character, who will, I am sure, do justice to the selection which has been made of them. This very moderate and limited application of the principle will not materially affect the position of those now in the service.

The gradual admission in the future of Natives to the higher walks and fields of civil employ, which have heretofore been almost exclusively filled by Europeans—a problem of the utmost interest to all those who have at heart the mental and moral progress of the people of India—would no doubt give a potent stimulus to all that is best and worthiest in the Native character. That it cannot be arranged to any considerable extent at the moment is manifest, by reason of the demands of justice towards the officers now in the service, who have won their places in open competition in England, who have come to India with strong moral claims on the State, and who are better fitted for the offices they actually hold, or justly expect to fill, than any other men who could possibly be obtained. But it may easily be arranged in the future, either by enacting that a certain proportion of recruits for the Civil Service in each year shall consist of Natives, or by reserving for Natives a certain proportion of the total number of civil appointments and determining the number of recruits from England accordingly, or by some other cognate plan. By these means the object can be accomplished hereafter to any extent that may be desired without doing injustice to any one, and without giving rise to any reasonable complaint.

In the Uncovenanted Service I continue to receive satisfactory reports of the probity and integrity of the higher classes of Native officers, both judicial and executive. This happy result of all the care that has been bestowed by the State upon the training of the nation must produce a feeling of thankfulness in all reflective minds. It is attributable not only to administrative arrangements, securing that ease of circumstance and that certainty of prospect which place men beyond the reach of temptation, but also to that ethical discipline and that contact with living example which are found in the English education imparted by the superior schools and colleges.

The value and usefulness of the additional staff of Sub-Deputy Collectors and canoongoes (notaries) introduced by my predecessor is now generally acknowledged by the district officers, especially in reference to the many administrative improvements which the spirit of the times is constantly demanding. *

Provision has been made for nearly all the candidates who passed at the public examinations instituted by my

predecessor: those few who remain will be provided for. The revised plan, whereby a fixed number of places in the subordinate executive service was to be offered for competition, came into effect during the year. Five Native candidates thus won places, and were immediately provided with appointments. A similar examination will be held during the coming year, the number of places to be competed for being determined according to existing or probable vacancies.

The rule that all Native candidates for the superior appointments in all branches of the service, judicial or executive, must be graduates of the University of Calcutta, is being carried out more and more. The effect of this, both upon the service of Government and upon public education, cannot fail to be excellent; and the influence thus exercised ought to be decisive. The standard enforced for admission to the public service will, under the present circumstances of Bengal, dominate the standard for everything. The desideratum, then, is to ensure the test subjects for university degrees being appropriate, and the examinations being thoroughly strict, so that a degree may be the stamp of a really suitable education, and then to admit none but graduates to civil employ.

There are many European officers in the Uncovenanted service in its various branches who in respect to activity and capacity for work possess all the qualifications that can be desired.

Outside this category are those gentlemen who, being engaged in England, come out to India under what is virtually a covenant; such as those who belong to the branches of civil engineering, forestry, and collegiate education. They prove themselves to be officers of an excellent stamp, having received a special training professionally, or having taken degrees in the English universities.

The system of concentrating in the Magistrate and Collector all powers and functions within the limits of his district is steadily followed throughout these provinces. I bear in mind that this does meet with objections from some sections of Native opinion, as placing an undue aggregate of power in the hands of a single man. But these objections are outweighed by the advantages of such concentration for the work of a progressive administration. Having regard, however, to the natural sensitiveness of the people on the point, the Magistrates and Collectors must be particularly

careful to evince forbearance and considerateness in the exercise of their varied and widely extended authority.

The parcelling out of districts into subordinate parts for administrative purposes, called "subdivisions," has now been completed for the whole of these provinces. The merits of the system appear to be universally acknowledged.

There is a question, however, whether those districts which have each a population of two millions or upwards are not too large for effective and judicious management, and whether in such instances new districts ought not to be formed. This matter is under consideration.

There is nothing special to be recorded respecting our political affairs during the year; no trouble having arisen either on the Looshai Frontier, or in Hill Tipperah, or with Bhootan, or with Sikkim, or in Sonthalia, or in our western border, or in the hill states of Orissa. The road which is being improved from Darjeeling to the frontier of Choombee, which is the outlying part of Thibet lying nearest to British territory, will have some political effect by facilitating commercial intercommunication with the regions beyond the main Himalayan watershed—regions which, though sparsely peopled, are rich in raw materials and in live stock, which might be exchanged for British and British Indian products. The road, also, which is being opened out along the great mountain ridge which separates Nepal from Darjeeling and Sikkim will prove of considerable value politically.

The utmost care is bestowed on the reviewing of the annual reports of the numerous departments of the civil administration, and in the embodying of the results of such reviews in formal resolutions, which are regularly published in the *Gazette* for the guidance of those engaged in the administration, and for the satisfaction of those classes of the public who may be specially interested in it. This plan has formed an important feature in the administration.

II. Administration of the Land.

THREE measures of cardinal importance in the administration of the land have recently been passed into law, namely, those for the compulsory registration of possessory titles to land, for the amendment of the law regarding the

partition of joint undivided estates, and for the prevention of agrarian disputes and disturbances.

The object of the Act for the compulsory registration of possessory titles in lands is nothing less than the registration of all proprietary titles in the lands of these provinces, not only of the lands paying revenue, but also of lands declared to be revenue-free. The magnitude of the task will be understood from the fact that there are more than 150,000 estates on the revenue-roll, besides a vast number of minute revenue-free estates. The necessity of having such an authoritative register has been recognized from a very early period of British rule in Bengal. A regulation of 1793 directed that the names of the proprietor or proprietors of each estate should be entered in a register opposite to the estate. A register was thus made, and has to a certain extent been kept up in all the districts. But it has generally lapsed into a condition of incompleteness more or less, mainly owing to the failure of the land-owning classes to register successions to, and transfers of, proprietary right. And when once the registration had fallen into partial disuse, there were doubts as to the expediency of enforcing it, for fear of the disputes which might be engendered by any renewal of the attempt. The definition of the shares in each estate had always been deficient, and this want became the more felt as the subdivision of landed property increased. After discussions which began so long ago as 1837, at one time ceasing at another time reviving, the Board of Revenue in 1873 represented that, all objections notwithstanding, the renewal of the registers must be undertaken because (among other reasons) the legislature had during recent years been imposing on the proprietors of land many new duties the performance of which could not be enforced by the authorities without knowing exactly the person or persons who being in possession were answerable for such due discharge. It was understood, however, that in the event of dispute the revenue authorities must be empowered to decide possession summarily and provisionally, leaving, of course, all questions of right to the civil courts. And as enlarged forms for registers and an improved procedure to ensure the registration being effected simultaneously for the whole country within a given time were deemed essential, I caused a measure to be submitted to the Legislative Council which has passed into law. All proprietors, including sharers, are

required to apply for the registration of their titles on or after a date which was fixed in October last, and in a particular form. Penalties follow upon failure to apply within six months after that date. Applications are beginning to be made accordingly, and will doubtless pour in as the end of the six months draws near. Some little time will elapse before the registers are completed in the form prescribed, and before all the disputes as to possession shall have been summarily decided. But the whole work ought to be finished before the end of 1877.

Some sections have been introduced into the Act protecting the tenantry in joint undivided estates against the chance of being troubled to pay their rents more than once to several sharers in the estate, a grievance of which there has been much complaint. The protection thus afforded will, it is hoped, obviate the necessity of introducing a Bill for the appointment of managers in joint undivided estates, a measure which had been contemplated in order to relieve the ryots from the harassment of demands on the part of several sharers for the same rent.

In amending the law regarding the partition of joint undivided estates, the purpose was to devise a procedure which should ensure the prompt treatment of applications for partition, the effective exhibition of all objections, and the disposal of them within a reasonable time by competent agency. The number and gravity of these partition cases have always been great, and apparently the process will continue until all joint undivided estates in the country shall have been divided. The number of possible cases cannot, however, be estimated, because the demise of any large single proprietor leaving several sons or other lineal descendants may cause the succession to fall to a joint undivided family.

The object of the Act for the prevention of agrarian disturbances is to enable the executive Government to empower the land revenue officers to decide with full judicial effect disputes between landlords and tenants regarding rent whenever such disputes are deemed serious. The need of taking power to assume this jurisdiction on behalf of the land revenue officers was shown in the last Administration Report. Serious disputes had arisen in the Pubna district, which produced very protracted and embittered litigation. Ostensibly, these have been for the most part decided by the

Partition of joint undivided estates.

Prevention of agrarian disturbances.

civil courts. Whether the quarrels have been really composed, is a question on which opinions differ. Further disputes of an equally dangerous character were threatened, indeed were impending, in Dacca. These have been settled through the exertions of the local revenue officers under the direction of the Government without the assistance of the law, the Act empowering them to assume the jurisdiction not having passed. Now that the Act has passed, there will be no difficulty in taking prompt and effective action should any more disputes spring up. On the one hand while the peace is absolutely kept by magisterial force, on the other hand the merits of the questions involved will be calmly investigated and authoritatively decided. As yet, however, no more disputes have arisen, nor are there signs of any arising. It is very possible that the knowledge that this Act is on the statute-book, and that there is ready at hand a power of bringing the whole question to judgment, may deter the disputants on either side—landlord or tenant—from provoking or challenging a final issue. Perhaps each party is for the moment disposed to concede something to the other rather than enter on a contest which will not be allowed to drag its length from one court to another, but will be immediately investigated, and will soon be brought to a complete and final decision. Nothing fosters disputes so much as uncertainty as to how or when a decision can be had. The Act may therefore have a very sedative effect, although it has seldom to be put in force. At all events it arms the Government with full power to prevent agrarian trouble, and the importance of this can hardly be overestimated. Under the agrarian and rural circumstances of the country, moreover, the materials for such disputes are unfortunately so abundant that many well-informed observers think that notwithstanding the outward calm which now prevails, there are questions growing inwardly between landlords and tenants which must sooner or later burst forth in the shape of extensive quarrels, unless some rules more definite than any which now exist shall be framed for the guidance of the authorities in the determination of rents.

It is with a view to such determination of rents that I have set on foot an inchoate measure which is still pending before the local legislature. It is to be borne in mind that the last Rent Act for Bengal (VIII of 1869) clearly lays down the conditions under which alone the rent

Proposed legislation for the guidance of authorities in the determination of rents.

of an occupancy ryot can be enhanced. But it does no more than this. It does not prescribe any rule, nor even any principle, upon which the enhancement is to be determined. The consequence is that whenever a dispute arises, the parties cannot form any idea as to how it will be decided. The courts do not, indeed cannot, know how to decide; and the end is that no real decision can be attained. It follows, then, that no enhancement is lawfully adjudged, and consequently the landlord is strongly tempted to obtain by illegal means what he regards as his due. This again produces resistance on the part of the ryot; and if many ryots are implicated, then some union or other combination is formed, which ends in a general withholding of rents by the tenantry, and an attempt at forcible exaction of it by the landlord,—in all which there lie the germs of agrarian disturbance. Thus there is an uneasiness abiding deep in the minds of both parties, and as it were an underground agitation going on, which we are not, though we ought to be, able to stop. The injury which must thus befall the landlord's interest is manifest. But as regards the economic and agricultural interest of the country, the injury to the ryot is still greater; for he cannot know how far, and by what calculation, his rent may be lawfully enhanced. He may have a notion that some enhancement may be demanded, and may yet be resisted with more or less of success, but only after a contest. But the liability to such an uncertain demand must be harassing to him, must detract from the value of his tenant right, must damp his zeal for improving his land, must make him chary of laying out his little capital upon it. Therefore it behoves the legislature to put an end to this uncertainty.

It is not possible, under the circumstances of Bengal, that rents should remain unchanged. If the value of land is to increase with the rise of prices and the improvement of produce, it follows that there must be a moderate and gradual augmentation of rent throughout the country from time to time, enough to satisfy the rights of the landlord, while leaving a clear and liberal margin of profit to the ryot. If the material resources of the nation are to grow and expand; if the culture of new staples is to flourish—the jute of yesterday as it were, the tobacco of to-day, the flax of to-morrow; if the use of machinery is to spread, not only around capital cities, but also to the remote interior: if, in short, agriculture is to advance, then concurrently some augmentation of rent is to be expected, equitable doubtless,

and consistent with the maintenance of a stable and valuable occupancy status for the ryot, but still augmentation. The very law itself, by prescribing the conditions under which rent may be enhanced, contemplates the possibility of such enhancement. It is too late now to recede from that position. Although the permanent settlement in Bengal did clearly imply protection for the tenantry, it did not promise that their rents should never be enhanced. Such a promise would have involved a special and perpetual sub-settlement with the ryots, which was in fact never attempted. Though the settlement virtually prescribed the established local rates (pergunnah rates) as guides, it yet did not stipulate that these rates should never be augmented as time went on. Nor were these local rates definitely ascertained and settled in the beginning; such an ascertainment would have been tantamount to an authoritative settlement of rents through the country—an operation which has not been, and doubtless will not be, undertaken.

On every ground, then, there is a case for interposing by legislation while it can be dispassionately considered, and before the angry feelings on both sides shall become so inflamed as to render settlement almost impossible.

Meanwhile, as the best rule that could be framed in the absence of any guidance from the law, the High Court devised what is known as the rule of proportion. According to that, the new rent should bear the same proportion to the value of the produce as the old rent bore to the old value of the produce, at the time when the rent was last fixed or at some subsequent period which may be taken as a starting point. But, although this rule may be the only one that could be put forth without resorting to legislation, still it is essentially defective and cannot be easily worked. The whole arena of contest is opened out as to what the value of the old produce of the land really was; and even as to what the old rent really was, inasmuch as there are no village records filed in any public office, and unless the ryot possesses the old receipts, there is no one who holds a record save the zemindar, and his record would be disputed by the ryot. Further, it by no means follows that the old rent was right merely because it was the old rent. In the disputes which now arise it will be alleged that the old rent was faulty, and that a new rent ought to be determined on better principles. But the rule of proportion in a great degree stereotypes and perpetuates whatever faults existed in the old rent.

If, then, some better rule must be found, how is it to be attained? In order to solve this question, I have for some time past been gathering opinions from all quarters whence the best information might be obtainable—European and Native, official and non-official. Propositions and counter-propositions have been laid before Government; a mass of valuable ideas and suggestions has been collected.

It is admitted that our 'proposals need not go beyond the class of occupancy ryots, leaving the non-occupancy class to the operation of the economic law of supply and demand. Probably, however, the occupancy category comprises the vast majority of the ryots.

Two alternatives have after the fullest consideration been put forward, namely—*firstly*, to take the ordinary rent rates paid by non-occupancy ryots or tenants at will, which may be regarded as representing the competitive rent for which the land might be let in open market, and to assume that as a standard for the occupancy ryot, allowing him a favourable difference of 20 to 25 per cent. less—in other words, the rent of the occupancy ryot being made so much less than that of the non-occupancy ryot; or *secondly*, to calculate the rent of the occupancy ryot at a certain proportion of the value of the gross produce, the said proportion to be taken at from 15 to 25 per cent. of the said value. It is necessary to propose some margin within which the discretion of the court of justice may be exercised—the difference less in favour of the occupancy ryot to be from 20 to 25 per cent., the proportion to be from 15 to 25 per cent., because in different parts of the country the customary rates of rent vary proportionally to the value of the produce, being lower in northern and eastern Bengal and higher in central and western. It is also proposed that no claim for the reduction or abatement of existing rents shall be entertained in consequence of the rules.

The adoption of the non-occupancy rent as a standard for the occupancy rent has been advocated by the British Indian Association—the most important society of landlords in the country. It is remarkable, then, that an objection has been urged to the effect that the occupancy ryots are in many places already paying as much as, or more than, the non-occupancy. Well; but then the effect would be that the occupancy ryot would be by this rule protected altogether from enhancement, which protection he would enjoy on the express recommendation of the landlords.

The prevailing opinion among the many persons who have been consulted is in favour of the rent being adjusted according to a proportion of the value of the gross produce taken at 15 to 25 per cent. But objections are made to the effect that in some places the actual rent levied amounts to much more than 25 per cent., and in some places to less than 15. The answer is that where it exceeds 25 per cent. the ryot is protected from further enhancement, and where it is less than 15 it must in reason be raised gradually to that proportion—in the absence of specific agreement to the contrary; but the enhancement would be made not necessarily at once, but by degrees and from time to time.

There is a question as to what should be regarded as the produce of the land for this purpose. By ordinary staples of our agriculture are of course meant rice, wheat, oil-seeds, jute-fibre. But besides these there are certain products which require special tending and a certain outlay of capital on the part of the ryot, but which are, on the other hand, very valuable; such as sugarcane, mulberry, tobacco, turmeric. It is thought most convenient to provide that these crops should be charged at rates double those of the ordinary staples.

There are certain tenure-holders intermediate between the landlords and the ryots, who are not protected (as most tenure-holders are) either by the old regulations or by particular agreements. It has been proposed that their rents shall be fixed at rates 20 per cent. less than those of occupancy ryots.

Such are the principal features of the proposals, to the principles of which the assent of the Government of India has been obtained, and which I have embodied in a draft Bill which has been transmitted under existing rules for the previous consideration of the Secretary of State.

In the same Bill it has been thought desirable to provide that ryots of long standing, who cultivate under other ryots, shall be entitled to the benefits of the occupancy status. In North-Eastern Bengal (Rungpore and elsewhere) there are large bodies of cultivators who equitably ought to be treated as occupancy ryots, who nevertheless are not so treated, because they cultivate under other ryots.

We have also introduced some provisions for simplifying the process for realizing arrears of rents in undisputed cases by empowering the court, on application from the landlord, to cause a notice to be served on the ryot requiring either to

Realization of arrears
of rent.

pay or to appear and show cause to the contrary. In the event of the ryot neither paying nor appearing, the court will be able to order realization of the amount by the ordinary process of executing decrees.

The Bill for affording relief to the encumbered estates in the Chota Nagpore province has passed into law. The indebtedness of the rural aristocracy of that half-civilized province is a source of political as well as economic mischief. It was necessary to give legal sanction to the arrangements which the local authorities had long been in the habit of making, and to define precisely their powers regarding the management of those estates—and those only—which, though in danger of becoming insolvent, might yet by thrift and forethought be restored to solvency.

It were much to be desired that similar powers could be taken by law to bring under management certain estates in Behar, which are of such territorial dimensions as to have a certain sort of political significance. There are, unfortunately, objections to such a law being passed. An opportunity will be taken, however, when the law relating to the Court of Wards is being amended, to propose that the civil courts may, on application of the revenue authorities, order landed estates to be brought under management by reason of the proved incompetence of the proprietor to manage for himself; or that on application of the proprietor himself, the revenue authorities may for the same reason assume the management.

The comparatively low condition of the ryots and the peasantry in those parts of the province of Behar which lie north of the Ganges, and especially in the upper half of the old district of Tirhoot, continues to cause regret and apprehension. In these tracts the people had not recovered from the weakness and depression which necessarily followed after the famine of 1874, when they were afflicted by scarcity during the spring and summer of 1876. That scarcity spread over a considerable area, and would have proved serious had it not been for the abundant harvest in Bengal generally and in some of the surrounding districts especially, and for the importing power afforded by the new State railway.

The revised census and other inquiries instituted in consequence of the scarcity showed that the power of distraint, which the law gives to the landlord with certain well-defined

limitations, had in North Behar generally from time immemorial been exercised by the landlord to an unlimited extent, placing the crop of the tenant from sowing time to harvest virtually at the disposal and under the watchful control of the landowner. The practice, when carried thus far, is subversive of the status which the ryots ought to possess, and which the law meant them to have. I have instructed the local authorities to bring about its relinquishment gradually and judiciously, securing ultimately the rights of the peasantry without any violent or disturbing change; and I have caused an example to be set on this behalf throughout the great Durbhunga estate, which is under the Court of Wards, and in which the practice prevailed almost as much as anywhere.

The material advancement of the sub-proprietors, the ryots, and the peasantry in Eastern Bengal, has been mentioned with satisfaction on former occasions. A remarkable illustration has been afforded by the detailed inquiries which are being made for the valuation of the lands in the deltaic district of Backergunge. It appears from the road cess returns that the rent roll payable to the intermediate tenureholders is often 10, 20, or 50 times the rent paid to the superior landlord. It seems probable that not less than a crore of rupees (assumed as equal to one million sterling) are annually paid in rent in this district, and that the value of the agricultural produce of the district can hardly be less than five millions sterling annually, and may be much more. The returns, moreover, while they show the prosperous condition of the tenure-holders and other middlemen, show also how the profits of the land are slipping out of the hands of the zemindars, who have permanently alienated their interests in the soil, and in many cases have fallen into the position of needy annuitants.

Although there has been no serious trouble and no manifestation of widespread discontent in regard to indigo-planting in Behar, yet there have been, and still are, signs which require watching in the shape of occasional complaints, disputes, affrays. Each of these cases may have, indeed, an individual character of its own; but there are some characteristics in the mode of their occurrence which make us fear that general causes must be at work. I have, however, refrained from making general inquiries and from issuing general instructions, all which are so liable to be misunderstood and so calculated to bring about the very kind of disturbance they

were intended to prevent. I have preferred to warn our officers to deal very strictly and firmly with each case that may come under their cognizance, trusting to the example thus illustrated producing its unmistakable effect on the community, and reminding all concerned of the several means which the laws already afford for the administration of justice—such as the recognition of the occupancy status; the assumption by the revenue authorities of jurisdiction for preventing agrarian disturbances; the limitation of the power of distraint; the institution of putwarees or village accountants in Behar, together with their village records; the quartering of police upon turbulent localities; the protection of the cultivators against forcible compulsion, and of the planter against rioting.

III. Protection.

A LARGE portion of my time and thoughts has been given to legislation, which has of late been more important than any other branch of the administration. The Legislative Council of Bengal is a thoroughly satisfactory institution. Its members, while independently asserting their own views, exhibit that mutual forbearance which is essential to joint decisions being obtained, and that public spirit which subordinates all considerations to the main object of securing some measure which, if not perfect, will yet promote the general weal, as far as may be possible, under the circumstances. The measures before the local legislature are fully and carefully discussed in open Council. The Native members take a lively interest in the discussions. The fact that European and Native non-official gentlemen are invited to take part in legislation has the best moral effect upon the community, and helps to make all classes contented with the laws under which they live.

In respect to the course of legislation, those measures which relate to the administration of the land have been mentioned in the last preceding section, namely the Acts for the registration of titles to land, for the partition of joint undivided estates, for the prevention of agrarian disturbances, and for the management of certain encumbered estates, also the Bill for improving the substantive law of rent.

The Bills for altering the municipal corporation of the city of Calcutta, and for consolidating and amending the law relating to municipalities in the interior of the country, have passed into law.

The municipal corporation of Calcutta will receive further notice presently. I may here remark that the legislative discussions showed that there is much jealousy on the part of the people regarding the growth of municipal taxation in the interior of the country.

Bills are under consideration for prohibiting illegal cesses in navigable channels, high roads, and market-places; consolidating the law relating to the excise; amending the rent law in the Chota Nagpore province; improving the law relating to the Court of Wards; defining the status of certain "ghatwalee" (local militia) tenures in certain districts; consolidating the laws and regulations regarding the land revenue; giving legal effect to the determination of rent by settlement officers in estates belonging to, or under the management of, Government; transferring the management of ferries from the Magistrates to the District Road Committees.

As regards the regular police, the relations between that department and the magistracy have settled down into smoothness and harmony.

Criminal justice and police. Though the Government of India did not accede to the introduction of a Bill into the local legislature for defining all these relations by law, yet we have been able to carry out executively all the rules which were embodied in the Bill. While retaining fully their departmental status, the police loyally obey the Magistrate, and regard themselves as instruments in his hands. The Magistrate, on the other hand, feels himself answerable for the repression of crime and for the conduct of the police. It is apparently still the belief of many Natives that the union in the Magistrate of police powers and judicial functions under the criminal law is impolitic. They say in effect that the catcher of the thief and the judge of the charge of theft ought not to be the same officer. They will also point to particular cases in which Magistrates have overstrained these double powers. In practice, however, the Magistrate seldom tries criminal cases; and, notwithstanding occasional instances to the contrary, I believe that the system on the whole works conclusively well.

Notwithstanding some serious instances of indiscipline and misconduct, I think that the conduct and discipline

of the force is fairly good generally. Though I fear that its popularity with the people does not increase, still specific causes for its unpopularity (if it be unpopular) are not easily discerned. Perhaps one cause may be the tendency to arrest persons hastily. The returns shew an excessive number of persons arrested who are not prosecuted to conviction. Admonitions regarding this have been issued to the police. That they are often harsh and rough in their manner to the people, is probably but too true. In this respect they receive every discouragement from authority. Though corruption has much diminished on the whole, yet petty malpractices are doubtless still rife in the lower grades of the force. But if there is a custom immemorably ancient here, it is this. On the whole, I should regard the jealous criticism of the police department by the Natives as a sign that they are awaking from their former apathy and submissiveness. They may certainly reckon upon the support of authority in resisting oppressive conduct. The best guarantee for its cessation is the disposition of the people to resist.

The higher Native officers of the force bear a tolerably good character on the whole, but not so high as that borne by the Deputy Magistrates and the Native civil judges. While some of the inspectors are excellent, others are ill esteemed. The status, and I fear also the conduct, of the subordinate officers, the sub-inspectors, and head-constables, continue to be very indifferent. This matter causes much regret, as vitally affecting the efficiency and honesty of the force; but a remedy can be applied only at considerable expense, which at present we are unable to afford.

It is hoped that during the year decisive progress has been made in improving the status of the village police. The Act passed for this purpose in 1870 has been introduced into almost all the districts in these provinces, and has been, or is being, carried out in a large proportion of the villages. The effect of it is to empower the Magistrate to cause a proper income for the village watchman to be raised by the villagers among themselves, which again enables him to ensure competent men being employed and to exact from them a due discharge of duty. The consequences of this, in regard to the repression of crime and the maintenance of social order, must ere long be apparent.

Concurrently with this, our exertions have been redoubled in searching out and observantly watching all the bad

characters throughout the country. The law wisely arms the Magistrates with large powers of placing on security for bad behaviour suspected persons, vagrants, bad characters, men without ostensible means of livelihood, habitual evil liver, known receivers of stolen property, and the like; for it is by these classes, ramifying throughout our districts, that a great part of the deliberate, systematic, and professional crime of the country is committed. The total in all these provinces of persons who are thus kept under wholesome surveillance, and who would otherwise be preying upon society, is considerable, and amounts to several thousands. The attention bestowed on this matter by the magistracy, under the direction of Government, will doubtless bear fruit in the diminution of several classes of crime.

This must be one of the causes of the success attained in the repression of gang-robbery (once notoriously the bane of Bengal), a crime which has long been on the decrease, and which is reduced to comparatively harmless dimensions, though not yet extinct.

The Criminal Tribes' Act has been extended to these provinces with the view of bringing under reformatory discipline the tribes of Bedyas and Mughya Domes. The due execution of the measure, however, demands more expense than can be afforded. Some limited and inexpensive proceedings will be undertaken for reclaiming the Bedyas.

The Native Honorary Magistrates (946 in number) throughout these provinces continue to dispose of a large number of criminal trials. They evince more willingness to attend on fixed days, to sit on magisterial benches, and to take a share in the administration of the criminal law. The appointment of Honorary Magistrate is more and more regarded as a dignity.

They are very much employed on magisterial benches (wherein a stipendiary Magistrate sits together with two or more Honorary Magistrates) for the disposal of the summary trials, in which a sentence of short imprisonment or fine may be passed without appeal. I regret to find that the law which confers this summary jurisdiction is still regarded with distrust and disfavour by many among the upper and middle classes of the Natives. The animadversions, however, are only of a general character. Particular complaints or specific instances are but seldom adduced and hardly established. If any have been really made out, they are too rare and exceptional to affect the favourable conclusion which has otherwise

been formed. Reports and returns, so far as they can be depended upon, certainly warrant a conclusion favourable to the system. It is fortunate that these cases are almost all disposed of by benches in the business of which Honorary Magistrates have so large a share; and this at all events ought to afford a guarantee to the Native public for the moderation and considerateness with which this important jurisdiction is exercised. This consideration causes additional importance to be attached to the honorary magistracy as an institution. The maintenance of the summary jurisdiction is of consequence to the cause of order, but it ought to be so exercised as to command the confidence of all concerned; and that result can best be secured by associating Native gentlemen in the work as Honorary Magistrates.

For several months past the vernacular press, and perhaps some of the upper sections of Native society, have evinced a jealous susceptibility in respect to harsh or unduly severe or inconsiderate proceedings on the part of some of the District Magistrates and some of their magisterial subordinates. No doubt there have, unfortunately, been some instances of this description; indeed, with a very large body of officers and very extensive territories we can hardly venture to hope to be always free from such instances. In one notable case I deemed it necessary to remove an officer from his appointment as Magistrate and Collector on this account; in another case also I had to inflict a mark of the displeasure of Government. And in every case of the kind which has been brought to my notice, either by the proceedings of the courts of justice, or by the vernacular press, or by common report, I have carefully considered the circumstances, and have given orders which are calculated to, and doubtless will, ensure—if it has not been already ensured—that the Magistrates shall, in dealing with the Natives brought before them, evince not only strictness and vigour, but also considerateness and moderation. Notwithstanding that the public seem to be apprehensive on this score, I am sanguine that they will find there is no real ground for such apprehensions. After all, the cases which have occurred are relatively very few, and instances are not likely to recur. The Magistrates know very well that the Government is most anxious to avoid harshness, to reasonably regard the position of those whose status entitles them to consideration, to prevent hasty arrests, to adjudge punishment according to the character

of the offence and the condition of the offender, and to be merciful whenever mercy may be consistent with the ends of justice and with the paramount public interest. These views of the Government must surely impress themselves upon the minds of the magistracy. But irrespective of all this, the good sense and right feeling of the Magistrates will generally preserve them from erring in these respects. Notwithstanding the faults of a very few individuals, I can affirm that our officers are actuated by a hearty desire to treat the Natives thoroughly well, to execute their offices, indeed, according to the strict requirements of duty, but still to make all due allowance for excusable faults, and to give weight to all the favourable points.

Though I am disposed strongly to advocate the jury system, as calculated to produce a healthy moral effect upon the Native character, I cannot speak with unmixed satisfaction of the manner in which the important duties assigned to juries under the Criminal Procedure Code have been discharged. The general opinion seems to be that while they may be safely trusted to exercise the power which the law has entrusted to them regarding offences against property, the same confidence is not to be reposed in them with regard to offences of a capital nature.

The Bill for the establishment of reformatories for juvenile offenders has passed into law; and with its sanction the executive authorities will be able to bring under educational discipline all young persons who may have been convicted of any crime or offence. Already one reformatory is being established at Alipore, near Calcutta, and others will be founded hereafter if our means shall permit. But the measure has been shorn of much of its usefulness by the restriction which confines it to persons actually in jail under conviction for a particular crime or offence. I had hoped to see it extended to those unfortunate young persons outside the jails who are homeless, friendless, and uncared for, growing up in ways of vice and ignorance, which must lead to crime. It would have been easy, and in accordance with the practice of civilized countries, to enact that the Magistrates should in cases, on proof rendered, have power to order such persons to be placed in a reformatory. This course would be consistent with the highest moral duties of the State, and would save society from much harm. I trust that hereafter the legislature may be induced to adopt it, especially if the experience of the present reformatories shall prove satisfactory.

It is remarkable that Native opinion is adverse not only to capital punishment, but also to severity of punishment generally, and is in favour of shewing as much leniency as possible towards convicts. It is disposed to deprecate such punishments as flogging, and even the hard enforcement of prison discipline. In all these considerations regard seems to be had rather to the person who, though guilty, is suffering, than to the interests of society which are concerned in his punishment being so inflicted as to deter others.

While on the one hand the greatest care is taken of the clothing and diet of the prisoners and the sanitation of the prisons, on the other hand the labour and the discipline are rendered so rigorous as to cause incarceration to be dreaded by the criminal classes. Such at least is our aim. It is so far satisfactory to find from medical inquiry that the main cause of sickness in our jails is crowding, inasmuch as this cause is remediable or preventable. Constant endeavours are made by completing the central jails, enlarging district jails, providing temporary wards, and the like, to augment the space per head in the sleeping wards for the number of prisoners. We have not been permitted, for financial reasons, to obtain from England machinery for our jail manufactures. For the same reasons it has been impossible to attempt the introduction of the separate cell system. We hope to render the guarding of the prisoners more cheap and effective by substituting warders for the present police guards. Many questions in detail regarding prison discipline and management generally will be discussed by a committee which is shortly to sit at Calcutta.

The various recommendations made by me, as mentioned in the last annual report, for the improvement of the procedure for the administration of civil justice, have, in conjunction with recommendations made from other parts of India, been under the consideration of the legislature. Most of them will, it is believed, be adopted in some shape or other.

The points of primary importance are the entrusting of the execution of decrees to one department, and the assigning the work of local inquiries in civil cases to regular judicial officers instead of to the inferior officials styled ameens.

My proposals for improving the law regarding civil appeals, and for constituting appellate benches, to consist each of one European and one Native Judge, with powers to

decide appeals up to a certain value finally without appeal, are still under the consideration of the Government of India. This is a question of primary concern to the efficiency of our civil courts. We greatly regret that its decision, perhaps unavoidably, has been postponed. There are excellent and highly qualified officers among our District Judges, who might well be selected to sit on these benches, and the high character and improved qualifications of the Native judicial service will enable it to furnish men fitted to sit with their European colleagues.

The registration of deeds and assurances is gradually spreading more and more in the interior of the country, and we encourage it by opening rural offices wherever any demand becomes apparent. The registration, however, in the cases where it is optional, still fails to show the rapid development which we had hoped to see, and further efforts are needed in order to popularize the system.

We have for some time past been endeavouring to introduce the use of printed forms for the registration of the written agreements between landlord and tenant, and of bonds for small amounts. It is very desirable that these documents should be drawn up in some particular form, prepared on the best legal and practical advice, so as to be rendered most suitable to existing circumstances and most free from the chance of being disputed. This would save expense to the public; would keep them out of the hands of the petty practitioners who frequent the courts in the interior of the country; and, by rendering the process easy and intelligible, would cause people to appreciate the benefits of registration. Experiments with this object having been tried with marked success in several districts of Eastern Bengal, the plan has been recently extended throughout Bengal, printed forms being supplied for general use, and we hope shortly to extend it to Behar and Orissa.

The Act for the voluntary registration of Mahomedan marriages and divorces has been extended to all the districts of Eastern Bengal where the rural Mahomedan population is chiefly to be found, and carefully selected Mahomedan registrars have been appointed. It is hoped that many families will soon be resorting to them for registration.

The Port Commissioners of Calcutta have prosecuted, with all the public spirit and ability which they have displayed during many years, the improvements on the left

bank of the Hooghly, which have been mentioned on former occasions. A riverside tramway is about to be added to their long catalogue of useful works.

The constitution of the municipal corporation of Calcutta has been changed during the year. The Calcutta Municipality. old corporation consisted of Justices of the Peace, 129 in number, partly official, partly non-official, some being European gentlemen, the majority, however, being Native gentlemen of rank and position. Notwithstanding the high character borne by the Justices and the good services rendered by them during many years, it was felt that the corporation did not sufficiently represent various classes in the community who, by their growing wealth, their improved education, their increasing claims to consideration, were entitled to a definite voice in the management of the city. I therefore deemed it my duty to propose to the local legislature a new municipal constitution and a corporation, to consist of 72 Commissioners, of whom two-thirds should be elected and one-third appointed by Government. The town has been divided into eighteen wards. Six of these wards were to return two, and the remaining twelve wards three representatives each. Every person who paid Rs. 25 per annum in the municipal taxes or rates was to be entitled to a vote; the constituency thus obtained was expected to number about 13,468 persons, although only 4,994 persons registered themselves as qualified to vote. The main reason for providing that one-third of the total number should be appointed was the apprehension that a due proportion of representatives of the Europeans, and possibly of some of the several nationalities to be found in the city, might not be elected: in such a case the above provision would enable the Government to redress the balance. The Commissioners were to have power to execute all the works necessary for the well-being of the city, and to fix all the establishments with the exception of the police, the strength of which was to be determined by the Government, and to raise the necessary taxes. In the event, however, of their failing to execute works of proved necessity for the health and safety of the place, there was to be a power vested in the Government, after inquiry duly and formally made, to cause authoritatively the required proceedings to be taken. This measure, after much discussion in detail, was accepted by the legislature; some additional precautions only being introduced to define and regulate the procedure to be

adopted in the limited class of cases where the Government was authorized to interpose. The first elections under the Act have been held, a considerable portion of the qualified electors having voted, and a body of Commissioners have been returned, fairly representing the wealth and intelligence of the Native community. Among many classes there was apathy respecting these proceedings. By some influential sections of the educated classes an animated interest was felt. The number of European gentlemen elected being small, I have appointed persons belonging to this important section of the community to be Commissioners, and have so endeavoured to make up the desired proportion of Europeans at the Board of Commissioners. The new corporation has had several meetings, in which the newly elected or appointed Commissioners have taken an active and assiduous part, and in which, among other things, the budget for the ensuing year has been discussed and passed. They have succeeded in reducing the house-tax from $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 per cent., and have yet made some provision for most of the principal heads of service. Whether they have made adequate provision, or have kept a sufficient cash balance for working expenses, remains to be seen.

In justice to the memory of the late corporation, who for upwards of fourteen years conducted the municipal affairs of Calcutta, and who have deserved so well of its citizens, I will attempt a brief summary of the material improvements which have been carried out by that body, with a success as signal as the enterprise and perseverance with which they have been conducted.

First in importance are the new drainage works. The complete scheme provides for 39 miles of brick sewers and about 137 miles of pipe sewers, and up to the end of 1875 the late corporation had completed about 38 miles of brick and 37 miles of pipe sewers. Those who know what the old drainage used to be, or who now see what the drains are which yet remain to be taken in hand, can alone appreciate the magnitude and significance of the improvement. The mechanical power and appliances, whereby the vast volume of liquid sewage is daily carried off to the Salt Lake, several miles distant, are upon an imposing scale.

These works, so important to the health and convenience of the inhabitants, have already cost 67 lakhs of rupees (say £670,000), and it is estimated that a further sum of 22 lakhs (£220,000) will be required to complete them.

Closely connected with the drainage works was the question of a diffused and regular supply of pure water for drinking and other purposes. When the Justices first assumed office, the supply could be obtained only from tanks, of which the water was generally impure, often deleterious, and never sufficient in quantity. The reform of the arrangements for supplying water was undertaken by the Justices, who have, with the support and approval of Government, provided Calcutta with a daily supply of seven millions gallons of pure filtered water, at a cost of about 62 lakhs of rupees (say £620,000). On this supply (large though it was) being found insufficient, the Justices at once devised and carried out a supplementary scheme, by which about one and a half million gallons of unfiltered water is daily supplied for street watering and conservancy purposes. This additional scheme cost upwards of two and a half lakhs of rupees (£25,000).

The lighting of the town by gas had been taken in hand before the appointment of the Justices as a municipal corporation, but the lighting under their administration has been greatly extended. There are now about 105 miles of streets thus lit.

To the Justices also the city is indebted for the establishment of thoroughly clean and healthy slaughter-houses, and more especially for the construction of a really beautiful and commodious market-place for the European quarter of the place.

The sanitary arrangements of the municipality have also received the careful attention of the late corporation, who at a considerable cost constructed a line of rail about eleven miles in length for the daily removal of the street sweepings. The ventilation and improvement of the city has also been greatly improved by the opening out of some new streets of adequate breadth, by the widening of other streets, and by the converting of neglected and insalubrious areas into spacious squares and gardens.

IV. Production and Distribution.

THE monthly publication of the *Statistical Reporter*, the commencement of which was mentioned in the last report, has been maintained during the year. The original articles have been varied and

Statistics.

interesting, as might indeed have been expected from the wealth of materials presenting themselves for treatment, and from the literary ability possessed by so many in the public service. The figured statements have comprised a very wide area of information, notwithstanding the difficulty of checking the facts in such a country as this. Progress has been made in collecting the mass of valuable statistics which are presented. Without claiming an extreme degree of success for a publication beset with difficulty in its inception, still I trust that a good beginning has been made with a work which is creditable to our administration, and of which the want has been much felt. Something has been done towards the foundation of a sound statistical system in these provinces. And all must admit that some such system is essential to good government, seeing that without it measures of improvement cannot be either precisely devised or correctly carried out.

The *Bengal Gazetteer* is now nearly completed for all the districts of these provinces. It will be an enormous literary work, consisting of 20 volumes with about 8,000 pages in all. The supervision and composition are most creditable to the editor and to his several assistants. The information comprises all sorts of subjects—ethnological, topographical, physical, historical, linguistic, social, administrative, statistical. The quality of the work is of a high order, quite equal to the vastness and variety of the topics embraced in it.

The registration of the country craft, big and small, which ply on our rivers has been carried out every where during the year. The registers which have been carefully kept at some riverside stations now disclose authoritatively what has been so long known in general terms, namely the vast extent of the traffic on these navigable highways. The bulk of the river-borne traffic registered during the year amounted to three millions of tons, valued at 30 millions sterling.

Similarly the arrangements for the registration of the traffic crossing our several frontiers have been completed. The main facts of our inland trade are now statistically known. From these facts I extract some as being of special interest in regard to the trade of Calcutta.

About $8\frac{1}{2}$ million cwts. of rice are imported into Calcutta during a year. Out of these, $6\frac{1}{2}$ million cwts. are exported by sea to other countries and $2\frac{1}{2}$ millions are kept for consumption in the city. The trade in this staple,

so very largely produced in Bengal, is well sustained, and continues to raise the condition of the cultivating classes.

The rapid development of the exportation of wheat is a hopeful circumstance. Of this staple $3\frac{1}{4}$ million cwts. are imported into Calcutta, of which $2\frac{1}{4}$ millions are exported by sea to foreign countries, and half a million cwts. are kept for consumption in the city. The bulk of the wheat comes not from Bengal, nor Behar, but from the North-Western provinces of India. Although the facts are registered in Calcutta, the consequences affect Northern India generally, and not Bengal particularly.

Of jute there are $7\frac{1}{4}$ million cwts. imported into Calcutta during a year. Out of these, $5\frac{1}{4}$ millions are exported by sea to foreign countries and 2 millions are consumed by the jute mills established in or around the city. It may be that the exportation of the raw material has not been very well sustained during the year, but the expansion of the demand for local consumption is remarkable. There are now some 14 or 15 jute factories in and about Calcutta. The tall smoking chimnies in some parts of the place almost remind one of manufacturing centres in Europe. From these factories there were exported beyond sea the enormous number of fifty millions of gunny bags during the past year, which are used for packing the wool of Australia and the grain of all sorts in India, Ceylon, the Malay Straits, Egypt, the United Kingdom, and America. The industry took a spring upwards for packing the rice destined for the distressed districts during the famine of 1874. Subsequently it flagged, causing some loss to those engaged in it, and occasioning temporary depression; but it has since revived, and seems to have gained a hold upon the custom of distant countries. It promises to produce a marked economic and social effect upon Bengal.

Before quitting the subject of the export trade, I may advert to a few other staples.

The teas of Bengal and Assam are being exported in larger and larger quantities yearly. The total reached in the year amounts to 24 millions of pounds, which is equal to one-sixth of the amount sent annually from China to England, whereas a few years ago the Indian teas did not exceed one-eleventh of the Chinese. In the previous year the planters were much disappointed at the low prices they obtained for their teas. This was, however, mainly owing to faults in manufacturing. The lesson has doubtless stimulated

their carefulness. The fall of silver in the exchange with England caused a remarkable advantage to the tea industry. In the submontane tract ceded to the British Government by Bhootan at the end of the last war, there is still a very large area which could well be cultivated with tea. But besides augmentation of quantity there is also great room for improvement both in the mode of culture and in the making of tea. The land should be fully manured if the leaf-producing power of the plants is to be preserved. The leaves should be sparingly and thriftily plucked, so that overplucking ("overcropping," as it is called,) may not exhaust the plants. The drying of the leaves, on which the successful manufacture of the teas so much depends, and the economy of fuel, should be managed by scientific appliances. The sanitation among the huts of the labourers should receive strenuous attention. The increasing use of machinery in the tea plantations is remarkable.

We fear that the exportation of safflower (so important in Eastern Bengal) is on the decline, by reason of the competition of the cheap and brilliant, though comparatively fugitive, aniline dyes.

The export trade in silk, which has so unfortunately declined of late years, has revived once more by reason of the failure of the crop in Southern Europe; but the position of the article is precarious, depending on casual failures of the crop in Europe or in China.

Indigo yielded during the past year a bumper outturn in Tirhoot, and was moderately successful in Bengal, but prices did not come up to those realized in previous years.

The import trade generally has received a severe blow (we hope that its effects may prove to be but temporary,) by the sudden fall of silver in the exchange with England. The consumers of luxuries were for the most part suffering from the fall, and their depression immediately affected trade. Unfortunately the articles most injuriously affected were the British piece-goods. The trade in these had been previously depressed by what must be called over-importing, that is importing more than could be speedily and profitably disposed of in the Native markets inland. The further depression recently caused by the exchange has placed this very important trade in an unfavourable position; but we cannot feel doubt regarding its ultimate recovery if good harvests and general prosperity are vouchsafed to the mass of consumers in the interior of the country.

It is not necessary that I should here discuss the consequences to India generally of the extraordinary fall in the value of silver relatively to gold which began in Calcutta in March 1876 and reached its zero in July, and which has been gradually recovering subsequently. In these provinces doubtless, as elsewhere in India, it seriously injured many of the European servants of Government and most of those classes who live on fixed incomes. To all those whose families were residing in England, it caused losses which they could ill afford to bear. Threatening as it did the financial condition of the general treasury, it struck a heavy blow at all sorts of improvement, and it retarded all the progress, moral and material, which depends on the action of Government. It caused that unsettled and anxious feeling among public departments and the national interests pertaining thereto which always springs up when financial retrenchment is thought to be inevitable. But though it did bring about these evils, which are greatly to be deplored, yet it left many great interests quite uninjured, and to some it actually produced advantage. The export trade, on the whole, so far from suffering, received a stimulus, and some branches of it, notably tea, actually benefited. The prices in the interior of the country did not rise. The landed interests were not hurt, and the Natives generally felt neither detriment nor alarm.

The conservancy of forests is being fast developed on all the borders of these provinces, in
 Forests. the lower Himalayas, the hills of Chota Nagpore, the Chittagong frontier, and in the deltaic tracts. The area of Government reserved forests brought under treatment by scientific and professional forestry has grown from 120 square miles in 1873 to more than 3,000 square miles in 1876. The effect of these arrangements on the supply of timber, of which such vast quantities are needed in Bengal, will be felt not so much in the present time, but rather in future years, perhaps even in future generations.

In order to train the natives of Bengal for employment in forestry, whereby such large prospects are being opened out for skilled labour, we have decided to establish a school of forestry. The work of forestry is well suited to the natives of these provinces, better suited to them perhaps for climatic reasons than to Europeans. But if it is to be performed with real efficiency, the men must receive a special training at the outset. The business constitutes a profession, and those

who undertake it must undergo a professional preparation, which manifestly ought to be of two kinds—first, scientific, relating to botany; second, practical, relating to forestry. I attach much importance to the students being fairly well grounded in the elements of botany as a science, both systematic and physiological. No very high standard in this respect need be attempted; still the young men ought at the outset to acquire a competent knowledge of the structure and functions and the leading principles of the classification of plants. The handling and dissecting of plants by the students themselves is also an essential of primary importance. The Botanical Gardens at Calcutta, and the arrangements there made for the instruction of students of the Medical College, will afford every facility for instructing simultaneously the candidates for the Forest Department.

The Conservator of Forests will then select one or more of the Government reserved forests, wherein to afford to the young men that practical instruction in the work of forestry which is to form the business of their lives. In such a place they will see the application of the elementary scientific knowledge which they have presumably acquired already. All young men thus passed will be permanently employed in the Forest Department, under such terms as regards period of engagement and the like as the Conservator may settle; and no men save these thus passed will be employed in future.

The several alkaloids obtained from the bark of the cinchona trees are known as remedies for the fevers so prevalent in India; but as yet only one of these alkaloids has been extensively used as a medicine, named quinine, which is a very expensive medicine, quite within the reach indeed of the Government, the public departments, and the upper classes, both European and Native, but quite beyond the reach of the poorer classes of natives.

The desideratum, therefore, is to discover either some means of producing the alkaloid quinine much more cheaply, or else some other alkaloid or alkaloids which, while being very cheap, will answer as well, or nearly as well, as quinine. To supply this desideratum, to make this discovery, has been the hope of Government in instituting the costly and extensive experiments (quite beyond the scope of private enterprise) of which we are now beginning to reap the fruit. The object of Government has been not only to reduce the cost of its own quinine, which expense is becoming

actually considerable, but more particularly, and primarily, to find out some alkaloid febrifuge so cheap that the people at large may be able to buy it.

Our cinchona plantations are in the Darjeeling district. They cover 1,800 acres, and are stocked with cinchona trees, about three millions in number, which may be approximately distributed among the three species as below:—

					Trees.
Succirubra	...	...	...	...	2,600,000
Calisaya	...	...	...	...	350,000
Micrantha	...	...	...	...	50,000
Total				...	<u>3,000,000</u>

The *Micrantha* species, however, is found to contain little or no quinine in its bark, and may be put out of account.

Of the two useful species—*Calisaya* and *Succirubra*—the barks yield the medicinal alkaloids, quinine, quinidine, cinchonine, and cinchonidine in different proportions. The bark of the *Calisaya* yields chiefly one alkaloid, and that the most esteemed, namely quinine. In this bark the quinine represents about 85 to 90 per cent. of the total alkaloids, and can be extracted with comparative ease and cheapness.

The *Succirubra* bark contains a considerable proportion of each of the three principals, namely quinine, cinchonine, cinchonidine, and some amorphous alkaloids. These are extracted from the *Succirubra* in a mixed state, and are therefore called “the mixed alkaloids,” but practically the cinchona does not yield quinine.

The first question will be whether the alkaloids shall be extracted from the bark on the spot, that is in the plantations, or whether the bark shall be sent away to Calcutta in order that the alkaloids may be extracted there: in other words, whether the factory for manufacturing should be established on the plantations or at Calcutta. Either of the two plans would be suitable. I consider that the manufacture can be most advantageously conducted at Calcutta, as it will there be more under professional supervision, and have greater advantages in respect of mechanical appliances.

The general efficacy of the *Succirubra* alkaloids is admitted. Their precise effect cannot perhaps be determined immediately; the decision must be a work of some years, depending on medical testimony, on actual experience, and on popular acceptance.

Efforts have during the year been made to carry on the work of the herbarium in the Royal Botanic gardens in Calcutta. This very important herbarium was founded so long ago as the year 1800 by Roxburgh, who is called the father of Indian botany, and has gradually grown to its present dimensions, partly by reason of the collections made at various times, under the auspices of Government, by distinguished botanists, but chiefly by reason of contributions given by individuals devoted to the cause of botanic science, and particularly by Dr. J. D. Hooker, who, in his individual capacity, has presented at various times a great number of most interesting specimens, and has indeed been the greatest benefactor of the institution. Thus the herbarium possesses many associations which will become classical in the history of Indian botany.

The herbarium ought to be as complete as possible in respect to the Indian flora, in the broadest sense and to the minutest degree, according to the latest development of our knowledge; and in the Indian flora there is represented, as I understand, the greater part of the vegetable kingdom. It very often happens, however, that the herbarium, while possessing, for a species or variety, good specimens from some parts of India, is quite deficient in specimens from all other parts—and those perhaps very important parts—of the country. For instance, we have as yet but few specimens from the west coast of India, comprised in the Concan, Malabar, and Travancore; from the Nilgherry, Shevaroy, and Pulnee Hills; from the southern extremity of the Indian Peninsula; from Tipperah, Munnipore, and the Khasia Hills; from the lower Himalayan ranges immediately north of Assam; from Bhootan and Nepal; from the Chota Nagpore country to the west of Bengal; from the valley of the Nerbudda in Central India; from the valley of the Mahanuddy in the Central Provinces; from the Andamans and the Nicobars.

Every effort will be made in the future to supply these deficiencies, and to render the collection worthy of its distinguished scientific associations. Trained assistants will be deputed from the Botanic Gardens to visit distant places in India for the purpose of collecting specimens and making sketches of plants on the spot, and the officers of the Cinchona plantations and of the Government forests will be asked to aid in the work of collection.

In respect to foreign flora, the herbarium has many specimens from Europe; some from Australia and from some of the countries of Asia, especially Ceylon; a few from North and South America and from South Africa, but very few from the principal countries of Asia, from Northern and Central Africa, from the West Indies; while from the Arctic and Antarctic regions there are none at all. But having regard to the support continuously rendered to our herbarium by Dr. Hooker, and to his peculiar cognizance of the needs of an herbarium in India, we may hope to receive from him in the future that assistance which he is pre-eminently able to afford. By keeping up communication with the Botanic Gardens and institutions of other countries we may send them specimens of our flora and obtain specimens of theirs in return.

It has been found necessary to close the several model farms which had been temporarily established in Bengal because it was found that success could not be attained without scientific means and appliances much beyond any resources which we have at our command. The aim was to introduce new and foreign staples which may or may not prove suitable to this climate—a very difficult task, for the successful accomplishment of which the best talent procurable from Europe would be needed. But another object more immediately important seems to me to be this—to examine scientifically and botanically the physiological characteristics of all our principal indigenous staples, and the chemical properties of our soils, with a view to improving the fertility of our fields and the yield of our produce. In this, of course, the sciences of physiological botany and agricultural chemistry are concerned. Experiments in regard to these matters, in order to be at all conclusive, must be conducted and continuously watched by men of high scientific acquirements. With our limited resources this can be done only in a few selected areas. The lands belonging to the abolished Stud Department at Poosa, in Tirhoot, and a part of the large area belonging to the Botanic Gardens at Calcutta, are suitable for such a purpose, and in each case some trained scientific officers could be employed.

The canals of Orissa are now practically limited to the Cuttack district, the Government of India having finally decided that constructive operations should be limited to the works which are still unfinished in that district, and be not extended towards Balasore.

Irrigation

The rainy seasons having been very propitious during every year since the opening of the canals, the cultivators have not felt the instant need of irrigation, and are not so thoughtful for the future as to irrigate their fields for improving the culture of the present kinds of staples and for introducing other staples. Notwithstanding this, however, the progress of irrigation, though slow, does yet creep onwards year by year. The area thus irrigated amounted in the past year to 150,343 acres, yielding an income of Rs. 1,23,986. The result is as yet comparatively insignificant, but the first drought that may occur will give a vast impulse to irrigation; and once the cultivators shall have seen their fields drink the canal water, it is probable that they will never abandon that fertilizing agency; and thus the area suddenly expanded will maintain its expansion. The same remarks are applicable to the Sone Canals opened in the Shahabad district. The circumstances there, however, have been such as to impress the people more forcibly with the benefit of canal irrigation, for drought has partially befallen or threatened them since the introduction of the canal system.

In North Behar much progress has been made in preparing the minor projects for canals from the rivers Baghmutter and Kumla in North Tirhoot, and from the streams which diverge from the river Gunduk in Sarun.

A project for constructing a navigation canal from a point in the Furreedpore district, on the Eastern Bengal. Proposed canal in lower Megna, to Khoolna, in Jessore, and thence to Calcutta, has been under consideration during the year. It is calculated that if the vast river-borne trade of Eastern Bengal with Calcutta could be induced to follow this route, the distance which the boats now travel would be lessened by from 200 to 300 miles, while the dangerous navigation of the Pudda and Megna rivers would be avoided. Until the survey now in progress has been completed, it is impossible to give even approximate estimates of the cost of the scheme, and it is possible that this may be so high as to be prohibitory. But there can be no doubt that such a canal if effectively carried out would prove of signal benefit to the great exporting districts of Eastern Bengal.

Of the guaranteed railways the East Indian line continues to prove fairly successful. Its returns, both of passengers and of goods, are increasing. One cause of this is the activity in several

Railways.

branches of the export trade, especially wheat. The Eastern Bengal line holds the limited space in the trade of the country which it had won, and no more. It is apparently unable to overcome the competition from the country craft on the rivers, and the destruction of its Goalundo terminus by inroads from the Ganges has placed it under a further disadvantage, which, however, the railway authorities have energetically striven to meet.

Professional inquiry in detail has been made regarding the proposed branch railways in Central Bengal. The line to connect Moorshedabad with the Ganges (there called locally the Pudda) at Bhugwangola, just south of Rajshahye, is advocated. But for earliest execution preference is given to the line from Calcutta by Baraset to Jessore; and for this project endeavour will be made to raise capital locally, in the same manner as that which has been adopted in the North-Western Provinces. Being still convinced of the excellence of the project for a railway from Patna to Gya, we are striving to obtain capital locally for it, hitherto without success indeed; but hope is not abandoned.

The excellent progress made during the year with the Northern Bengal State Railway is one of the best features in the general administration of our public works. It reflects lasting honour on the Engineer in Chief and his principal officers. Their professional ability has been equalled by their devoted endurance in a very insalubrious country. For the first sixty miles of its course the line runs athwart the great basin of the Ganges, and presents an extraordinary length of lofty embankments. From the northern bank of the Ganges to Julpigoree the length of line amounts to 173 miles, and rails have been laid along the whole of this length to a point 20 miles from Julpigoree, except a break of five miles through a low swampy country. There is a sufficiency of railway-stations and ample level crossing accommodation. Almost all the bridges are finished, and the foundations of all of them are laid with admirable engineering skill, so as to ensure absolute stability notwithstanding the loose sandy or shifting nature of the soil. This progress has been accomplished in spite of great difficulties, as all skilled labour had to be imported, and almost all the ordinary labour; and the prevailing fever in the country through which the line passes has occasionally been so great as seriously to impede the work. The manner in which the

boats and light craft plying in the tortuous affluents of the great river were made use of to carry the railway material to the necessary points indicates great power on the part of the engineers in organizing the resources obtainable on the spot and adapting them to special purposes. When the line is opened to Julpigoree, there will still remain the portion (34 miles in length) from Julpigoree to Adulpore, the proposed terminus of the line at the foot of the Darjeeling Hills. The public generally, and the tea planters especially, are most anxious that this extension should be completed. It is an essential and integral portion of the line, and without it the railway would lose much of its value and importance. I hope that this railway may be open for general traffic by the summer of 1877. The line, when in full working order, will raise materially and morally the condition of Northern Behar, will infuse new life into the body politic, will facilitate all our administrative arrangements by rendering districts once dreaded by all our officers tolerably desirable, will conduce to the development of European industries in the eastern Himalayas, will render scarcity and drought comparatively innocuous, and will reduce even a severe famine within easily manageable limits. Future generations in this part of the country will have manifold causes of gratitude to those who originally advocated, and to those who had subsequently carried out, this capital project.

Among public works generally the new undertakings to be mentioned are the suspension bridge over the Teesta, on the road from Darjeeling to the frontier of Thibet; the water-works in the city of Dacca; the offices of the Port Commissioners at Calcutta.

The want of good architectural designs for the many important and interesting structures undertaken or projected in these provinces was palpably felt. By employing officers possessing artistic skill and professional taste, and technically versed in this speciality, I have obtained a series of designs beautiful in style and scientifically adapted to the several purposes in view. Such designs are those for the façade of the Bengal Secretariat, the Surveyor-General's office at Calcutta, the palaces at Durbhunga and Cooch Behar, the medical schools at Patna and Dacca, the College at Rajshahye, and others. The effect will be to improve the ideas of all, both European and Native, in the places where

these structures shall be erected, respecting form, outline, proportion, and ornamentation.

In the postal department the most noticeable point is the completion of the system of rural posts.

Rural post.

The rural post or zemindary dâk in these provinces comprises a total length of 7,000 miles of communication, served by 315 rural post-offices. The primary object of this service is the maintenance of police communications in the interior, and the cost is charged to a local fund administered by the Magistrate and levied from the landholders under the immemorial custom and common law of the country. No charge can be imposed upon the land for the conveyance of private letters by the zemindary dâk; but as the correspondence of the rural population naturally follows the lines already laid down, and as it is essential to encourage letter-writing as a powerful factor in national education, it has long been the practice of Government to convey letters by these lines for the public at the ordinary rates of postage. And of late years, in order to secure perfect uniformity of practice between the rural and imperial postal lines, the executive direction of the former has been gradually transferred from the District Magistrates to the postal department. The funds, however, so far as they are derived from the zemindary dâk cess, are expended entirely for the benefit of the district in which they are raised. Thus the rural post is maintained in its local status, and is made to co-operate with the organization of the imperial post-office. When this new system shall have come into full and harmonious working, it may be expected to result in a large development of private correspondence among the Native community (already amounting to 30 millions of covers annually), and a corresponding spread of intelligent knowledge among the peasantry of Bengal.

The general principles relating to the drainage of extensive areas of land in Bengal were explained in last year's report.

Drainage works.

The Government of India have accepted the principle so strongly advocated by us, to the effect that drainage schemes, when there is no doubt as to their immediately remunerative character, should be fostered and extended by the advance of necessary funds from Government, as was recently done in the case of the Dancoonee project. Accordingly the plans and estimates have been completed, or nearly completed, for the projects at Rajapore, at Howrah, and

at Ampta, on the right bank of the Hooghly river, and the Bullee project near Calcutta. The result of the Dancoonee drainage works proves to be excellent, both as regards cultivation and sanitation. The execution of these works, whereby pestiferous swamps may be converted into food-producing areas, is among the most crying wants of lower Bengal.

Much complaint having been made to me by well-informed Native gentlemen regarding the swampiness in the districts around Calcutta, alleged to be caused by the obstruction by roads—even by railways—of the natural outflow of the waters during the rainy season, I have ordered a special investigation into this subject, seeing that destructive fevers, sometimes in their ravages almost as bad as epidemics, prevail nearly every autumn in these districts.

V. Revenue and Finance.

I DEEM it an obligation again to record my thankful sense of the assistance uniformly received from the Board of Revenue at Calcutta. Although the conservation of existing things is most properly a feature in the administration of old regulation provinces such as these, still there is hardly any one of the various branches of our revenue in which some change of system has not been rendered necessary by the circumstances of the times; and there are none of these changes in which the Board's skill and experience in devising expedients and in giving effect to the ultimate decision of Government have not been essentially valuable.

In respect to the land revenue, the most important points have been noted in the preceding section, relating to the "administration of the land."

Land revenue.

The revenue is collected with that completeness and that punctuality which is to be expected in provinces under a permanent settlement. In most parts of Eastern and North-Eastern Bengal, indeed, the land revenue equals only a very small portion of the rental, and the prosperity of the land-owning class would be quite extraordinary were it not

for the "subinfeudation," or, in other words, the division of the rent payable by the cultivator between the proprietor and several classes of subproprietors. In Central and Western Bengal the landlords are less prosperous. The fiscal advantages of this settlement were most severely tested during the famine of 1874, when the revenue was collected without any postponement or remission or default, or any failure whatever. Without the relief afforded by Government to the famishing people, there must have been some serious failures in the land revenue and (what would have been a very great evil) some extensive transfer of landed property and ruin of old families. One counterbalancing advantage, then, of the heavy relief expenditure incurred by Government was this, that the great interests pertaining to the land revenue and to the land were preserved intact.

Notwithstanding the perpetual limitation of the demand of the land revenue, the revenue itself will not remain stationary. The constant resurvey and resettlement of the lands thrown up by the great rivers, and the thrifty management of the many estates, large and small, which from time to time fall into the hands of Government, offer legitimate opportunities of improving the state income.

On former occasions the large apparent arrears of rent in the estates belonging to Government were mentioned with animadversion. Further inquiries have shown that these arrears are for the most part apparent only.

In the Customs Department a committee has been appointed to consider in detail various amendments of the law with a view to the convenience of the merchants who land the goods and pay the duties. The customs revenue from Bengal exceeds a million sterling, and notwithstanding the general lowering of the tariff since August 1875, there was during the past year very little net decrease in the revenue.

Some interesting experiments (instituted by my predecessor) have been prosecuted somewhat conclusively in regard to the opium-producing power of the poppy in Behar. It is of great importance to have established by practical and scientific proof the fact that the augmentation of the produce of opium is of comparatively easy attainment. But besides this it remains to gradually induce the cultivators to adopt these measures of improvement for their own benefit as well as for the fiscal interest of the state. For this reason

Customs.

Opium.

it is absolutely necessary that the experiments should be continued; otherwise they will be forgotten, the seed distributed among the cultivators will either be thrown away by them or be allowed to fail, the other improvements suggested will be spoilt, and the lessons learnt during the past three years at some cost and trouble will remain a dead letter. I have accordingly directed the continuance of the experiments under skilled and trained supervision, and with the co-operation of the opium authorities.

Arrangements are being made for rendering the realization of the local duties on salt more easy and convenient to the people, by the abolition of what is known as the "rowannah" or "pass" system. Under that system no person is allowed to be in possession of more than five seers of salt, unless the salt is covered by a protective document issued by the Collector or by a wholesale merchant. The area within which this system is in force has from time to time been narrowed, and it is now proposed to reduce the area to the very smallest limits consistent with fiscal safety. The manufacture of salt in Bengal is confined to a belt of country not exceeding five miles from the sea-coast; and after considering the arguments that have been adduced on both sides of the question, I have come to the opinion that effectual precautions could be taken against risk; and that it would tend to the great convenience of the people, without endangering the revenue, if a strict detective supervision were exercised within this belt only, and if the country outside these limits were left free from the pass rules. The local authorities and the police would be answerable for the strictness of supervision within this narrow strip of country.

In the excise branch great pains have been taken to raise the rates of duty on country spirits in the interior to the highest limit consistent with the safety of the revenue, and in several districts enhancement has been ordered, though it is not possible to establish the same rate everywhere, as the circumstances of the consumption vary so much.

The attention of Government has been drawn to the increase which has taken place of late years in the consumption of cheap spirits, which are sold under the name of brandy. Arrangements have been made for the exercise of a strict police supervision over the traffic in this spurious stuff.

I have insisted on prompt and vigorous action being taken to enforce the law, and to check a nuisance which is injurious alike to public health and to public morality.

We are still prosecuting the experiments regarding the levy of the duty on the flower of the mowah-tree, which produces the spirit, instead of on the spirit itself. One difficulty arises from the doubt whether the yield of spirit from a given weight or quantity of the flower is always the same.

The subject of intemperance among the Sonthals has especially been causing anxiety to the Government of Bengal. The Sonthals in Sonthalia proper constitute a population of $1\frac{1}{2}$ million, inhabiting an area of 5,510 square miles. And the questions relating to intemperance which affect them must equally affect the Sonthals who dwell in the districts of the Chota Nagpore province, which adjoin Sonthalia, and in some degree also other aboriginal races who resemble the Sonthals in habits and disposition.

Recently a memorial was presented to Government by several Reverend Missionaries—whose benevolence, local experience, and devotion to the best interests of the people, entitle their opinion to great weight—describing the evils of intemperance among these people, and urging the Government to adopt remedial measures. Thereupon inquiries were made regarding the particulars of this intemperance—specially as to what kind of drink is, and what is not, largely or chiefly consumed—and regarding the measures which could or could not be adopted by the Government.

As regards licensed shops, it is clear that the local authorities have, with the entire approval of Government, done very much to check drinking and to lessen facilities for buying drink, as is proved by the figures given below :—

		1872-73.	1873-74.	1874-75.	1875-76.
Country-spirit shops	...	532	469	409	207
• Pachwai shops	...	113	98	58	35

The result of these figures seems to me to be satisfactory. If necessary, a further diminution can be carried out, especially in the neighbourhood of Christian villages the inhabitants of which are opposed to drinking.

The fact remains that the drinking is not so much of country spirits, nor of pachwai beer sold at licensed shops, but chiefly of the home-brewed rice-beer, called “pachwai” or “handia.” While the distillation of spirit other than

under regulation is strictly prohibited, which prohibition is fully obeyed, the brewing of beer from rice for consumption at home, and not for sale, is permitted without restriction, the permission dating so far back as 1835. It is certain that the Sonthals drink very little of distilled spirits or of rice-beer purchased at the licensed shops; but they do drink very much of the home-brewed rice-beer at all seasons habitually, and at some seasons to such an extent as to cause long-sustained inebriation among the mass of the people for days, even for weeks, consecutively.

The Reverend Missionaries, in the main, recommend the entire prohibition of the home-brewing of rice-beer. The Commissioner and the local officers (with only one exception) earnestly deprecate this: they doubt whether it could be enforced; or if it could, then they apprehend that the enforcement would bring a fresh class of serious evils into existence. Looking to the present circumstances of Sonthalia, and to the several administrative measures which are now being carried out there, I am not at all prepared to announce or enforce any such general prohibition. On the other hand, we must not be content with expressing in general terms a regret that such an evil should exist, and a hope that it may remedy itself during the progress of society. Something practical must be attempted. I think that Government must make it clearly understood, both by the local officers and by the people themselves, that this excessive drinking of home-brewed rice-beer is a very serious evil, which must be remedied sooner or later. The other races of Bengal do not indulge in this vice: neither can the Sonthals be allowed to do so. And the Sonthals must be clearly made to comprehend this. Whatever may be thought or said to the contrary, the Sonthals have a feeling of fear and respect for the commands of the Government; and the knowledge that the Government is fully aware of the prevailing drunkenness, condemns the evil, and purposes to mitigate or to prevent it, so far as possible, will have some effect. But this is not enough. The Commissioner should instruct the local officers to summon the various headmen of pergunnahs, of circles of villages, and of villages, and to concert with them measures for restricting the excessive consumption of the rice-beer. These men must well know that the Sonthals are the worse cultivators, the worse tenants, the worse woodmen, the worse traders, for all this inebriation; and their co-operation

can, more or less, be reckoned upon. They must be made to set a good example, and they must understand that hard drinking will be held to be a disqualification for the office of headman of any grade, whether of a village or of a circle of villages. It is probable that in the first instance the Sonthals will be induced to agree to some restriction or diminution of the brewing and the consumption. Much will depend on tact and management on the part of the local officers in obtaining such agreement, and in ensuring its being acted upon to some extent. Full reliance cannot, of course, be placed upon voluntary agreements in such a case as this. And thereafter, when the people shall have become accustomed to a partial restriction carried out with their own co-operation, and when their moral sense shall have been roused to its necessity, it may become quite feasible to render the restriction authoritatively absolute. When the way shall have been paved for it by degrees, the people may hereafter be induced to accept it. Meanwhile the endeavours, made in consultation and concert with the people themselves, will have practically shown in detail the particular shape which the restriction should ultimately take.

Notwithstanding all the repeated enhancements of duty upon the ganja drug, which has led to so much increase of revenue under this head, there is still reason to think that the supervision over the special cultivation of the plant, and over the storing of the leaves and consumption, may be rendered more and more strict. Detailed inquiries are now being made with this object.

Stampa. Last year I was obliged to state that the law was being largely evaded as regards the general stamps on bonds, receipts, and other papers, and that endeavour must be made to inflict a moderate penalty (as a deterrent) on those who thus break the law. Accordingly prosecutions have been undertaken in many instances in several districts with a fair measure of success. The effect on the future returns of the stamp revenue will doubtless be advantageous.

Road cess. The road cess may now be said to have been brought into effect throughout Bengal, the valuations and assessments being nearly complete in all the districts. As an adjunct to our provincial finance, its importance can hardly be overrated; and it is paid seemingly without a murmur. Its yield promises to be upwards of £300,000 per annum.

Of the two categories, imperial and provincial, into which the finances of Bengal are divided, the imperial account may be thus compared for the two years 1874-75 and 1875-76:—

Imperial finance
account.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	1874-75.	1875-76.		1874-75.	1875-76.
<i>Heads of Revenue.</i>	<i>Ra.</i>	<i>Ra.</i>	<i>Heads of Expenditure.</i>	<i>Ra.</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
1. Land revenue ...	8,64,57,247	8,77,50,325	2. Interest on service funds and other accounts ...	1,83,707	1,18,074
2. Forest ...	1,85,932	1,98,274	3. Refunds and drawbacks ...	9,96,040	10,28,375
4. Excise on spirits and drugs ...	56,34,667	60,88,175	4. Land revenue ...	27,43,040	28,13,583
5. Assessed taxes ...	1,215	205	5. Forest ...	99,404	1,39,086
6. Customs ...	1,09,10,770	1,07,63,641	6. Excise on spirits and drugs ...	2,93,244	2,90,380
7. Salt ...	2,67,63,827	2,56,15,527	7. Assessed taxes ...	.....	.....
8. Opium ...	5,60,28,255	5,92,19,188	8. Customs ...	6,52,531	6,68,772
9. Stamps ...	89,54,526	93,50,187	9. Salt ...	45,953	1,13,631
11. Post-office ...	15,69,507	15,94,796	10. Opium ...	2,33,82,946	2,21,60,115
12. Law and justice ...	7,83,286	6,83,352	11. Stamps ...	2,16,449	2,39,855
14. Marine ...	14,06,405	12,07,894	13. Post-office ...	23,48,464	23,25,295
15. Interest ...	7,16,205	7,59,908	15. Administration ...	16,94,593	16,25,779
16. Pensions ...	38,791	50,675	16. Minor department ...	1,93,458	1,71,147
17. Gain by exchange...	12,986	25,906	17. Law and justice ...	68,21,351	65,22,577
18. Miscellaneous ...	9,18,034	8,62,529	18. Marine ...	21,81,935	21,96,778
Total ...	16,08,86,483	16,41,71,082	19. Ecclesiastical ...	2,38,787	2,36,086
			20. Medical ...	3,53,670	3,40,109
			21. Political agencies...	24,085	87,362
			22. Allowances and assignments ...	24,61,812	24,59,595
			24. Superannuations ..	7,79,398	7,11,374
			25. Loss by exchange...	88	131
			26. Miscellaneous ...	68,389	2,28,429
			27. Allotments for provincial services.	1,10,41,600	1,10,60,337
			Famine relief ...	2,99,07,694	...
			Total ...	7,78,76,780	5,54,91,908

Thus the surplus of revenue over expenditure in Bengal amounts to nearly ten millions sterling available for the general expenses, military and other, of the empire.

The provincial account may be thus compared for the two years:—

Provincial finance account.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	1874-75.	1875-76.		1874-75.	1875-76.
<i>Provincial Services.</i>	<i>Ra.</i>	<i>Ra.</i>	<i>Provincial Services.</i>	<i>Ra.</i>	<i>Rs.</i>
1. Allotment from Government of India	1,10,41,600	1,10,60,337	1. Refunds ...	22,505	67,031
2. Provincial rates and taxes ...	.....	.....	2. Provincial rates and taxes ...	.....	.....
3. Jails ...	8,71,980	7,91,296	3. Jails ...	17,91,504	17,83,414
4. Registration ...	5,65,734	5,80,467	4. Registration ...	3,98,824	4,31,286
5. Police ...	41,895	38,556	5. Police ...	39,76,497	41,64,767
6. Education ...	5,02,363	4,95,287	6. Education ...	25,11,698	26,32,444
7. Medical ...	1,53,879	1,30,912	7. Medical ...	13,14,289	14,46,053
8. Printing ...	55,192	57,851	8. Printing ...	2,73,928	2,97,536
9. Marine ...	409	300	9. Marine ...	485	897
10. Miscellaneous ...	77,29,059	1,00,82,319	10. Contributions ...	29,36,635	97,36,646
11. Public Works ...	1,32,860	1,36,350	11. Miscellaneous ...	1,36,994	6,51,395
Debt heads...	4,28,638	3,55,842	12. Minor establishments ...	2,84,192	3,97,279
	2,15,21,659	3,57,29,318	13. Public Works ...	.....	.....
Opening balance ...	—19,038	23,61,593	14. Petty construction and repairs ...	48,89,762	34,14,720
	2,15,02,621	2,60,90,911	15. Rents, rates, and taxes ...	1,70,942	1,87,396
			Debt heads...	4,32,292	2,77,249
				1,91,41,028	2,55,90,961
			Closing balances ..	23,61,593	5,00,000
				2,15,02,621	2,60,90,911

RECEIPTS.—(Contd.)			EXPENDITURE.—(Contd.)		
<i>Provincial Reserves.</i>	1874-75.	1875-76.	<i>Provincial Reserves.</i>	1874-75.	1875 76.
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.	Rs.
Total receipts ...	2,49,807	12,68,779	Total expenditure	6,85,746	11,48,128
Opening balance ...	5,14,704	8,28,45	Closing balance ...	8,28,465	9,34,130*
	14,64,511	20,77,243		14,64,511	20,77,243
<i>Local Funds.</i>			<i>Local Funds.</i>		
Total receipts ...	61,89,008	85,27,124	Total expenditure	91,00,976	64,85,147
Opening balance ...	28,31,521	—2,71,447	Closing balance ...	—2,71,447	17,70,530
	88,20,529	82,55,677		88,29,529	82,55,677
<i>Municipal Funds.</i>			<i>Municipal Funds.</i>		
Total receipts ...	10,88,190	5,86,188	Total expenditure	11,79,618	5,80,661
Opening balance ...	1,51,574	85,146	Closing balance ...	35,146	46,673
	12,14,764	6,21,334		12,14,764	6,21,334
<i>Trust Funds.</i>			<i>Trust Funds.</i>		
Total receipts ...	1,16,808	2,00,602	Total expenditure	97,240	1,94,447
Opening balance ...	31,530	51,098	Closing balance ...	51,098	53,253
	1,48,338	2,51,700		1,48,338	2,51,700
			Total ...		

There has been some trouble during the year in settling the account between the imperial and the provincial branches of finance, relating to the public works executed during the famine of 1874 for purposes of relief. It was decided by the Government of India that the provincial treasury should pay all it could towards this object until its cash balance was reduced to the lowest point compatible with the administration of the provincial services, the general treasury defraying the remainder of expenditure which might be left after this contribution, and which constituted by far the largest part. As the works are of some permanent value to the provinces, the justice of this decision must be admitted. Under this view it was decided that the account should be adjusted so as to leave a working balance of five lakhs of rupees to the credit of provincial funds. In reference to the magnitude of the services concerned, amounting, in the gross, to more than two millions sterling annually on each side of the account—receipts and expenditure—it will be admitted that this cash balance is fixed at the smallest amount possible.

VI. Vital Statistics and Medical Service.

A QUESTION has been raised by high sanitary authority as to whether it is better to trust to vital statistics collected simultaneously all over the country, or to obtain them from a few selected areas over

* Surrendered to the Government of India on account of famine relief expenditure.

which supervision can be strictly exercised. I have decided to adhere to the system of concentrating attention upon certain selected areas. It is difficult enough to obtain really good returns even from these : indeed it can hardly yet be said that this modicum of success is achieved. It were vain to expect general returns in a complete and satisfactory condition for the whole country under present circumstances ; to obtain them would be impossible, and the attempt would produce nothing save statistical error. The introduction of the Act for the compulsory registration of births and deaths is being gradually and cautiously introduced into the municipalities and towns of these provinces. So far as the returns may warrant any definite conclusion, we are led to fear that the people are weakened and decimated by diseases which arise from humidity, and that improved drainage is most earnestly to be sought for, by reason of sanitary as well as other considerations.

The want so long felt of a new census for the city of Calcutta has been supplied during the year. The total of the urban population, 429,535 souls, is somewhat below the number previously returned ; but inasmuch as the former census was not to be depended upon, we cannot say whether the present census indicates any decrease in the population or not. It is generally believed that the population of the metropolis itself has not been ~~increasing~~ of late years. Within its limits there has been much clearance of ground for public works and sanitary improvements, and all this must cause the transfer of some portion of the townspeople to the suburbs. On the other hand, the opening of the bridge across the Hooghly has caused the great Howrah suburb to be much more accessible to people from Calcutta, and the population on that side of the river is believed to have increased.

A new census was taken in East Tirhoot immediately after the famine, which showed a population larger by 15 per cent. than that returned by the previous census. A similar census taken in a part of the Sarun district (North Behar) showed a population much the same as that previously returned.

The number of emigrants for the colonies sailing from the port of Calcutta has decreased,
Emigration. the number having fallen from 20,230

in 1874-75 to 9,251 in the past year. The famine of 1873 and 1874 did certainly stimulate emigration. But now that the danger is overpast, the people are relapsing into their

home-abiding habits, and the number of emigrants has diminished. This diminution in 1875 mainly arises from the slackening of the demand for labour in the colonies, which demand is doubtless limited by the amount of capital possessed by the employers. Despite all the lessons of the famine, the people in the densely populated tracts are almost as unwilling as ever to emigrate. Even though a recurrence of drought and scarcity in certain places following upon the famine nearly desolated some tracts, still there is the same hesitation as before to root up the little household and to replant it in a far-off land. In East Tirhoot, indeed, some few thousands of agricultural labourers, sorely pressed by the scarcity prevailing in their neighbourhood, did in the beginning of 1876 emigrate to the tea districts of Assam, but they left their wives and children behind them without any provision whatever. Had it not been for the presence of relief officers, these hapless women and children must have starved. A strenuous endeavour was made to induce a number of families to emigrate from Sarun, the district of all others that can best afford to send away some of its overflowing population, but without success. Much improvement of system has been made locally by the appointment of sub-agents for emigration under the Magistrate of each district.

The system of vaccination, whereby efforts are concentrated in selected areas until all persons therein residing shall have been vaccinated,

Vaccination.

is steadily pursued, the result being the almost entire cessation of small-pox within these limits. Inoculation being prohibited, the large number of persons who were once inoculators by profession became vaccinators. They afford a makeshift agency in the first instance, until by degrees a sufficiently large staff of vaccinators shall be trained and shall step into practice. Inoculation has now been prohibited and vaccination universally established in sixteen entire districts in Bengal, in parts of other districts, and in most of the principal towns in the province. Two new circles of vaccination, the Orissa and Bohar circles, have been sanctioned during the year.

Though the fever, which so long desolated Burdwan, has ceased to display itself in its peculiarly aggravated form, and although in that

Sanitation.

sense the plague so long known as the Burdwan fever has past away, still fever grievously prevails in many parts of

Western Bengal, specially on the right bank of the Hooghly ; and the victims of this obstinate malady in the tracts around Calcutta are sadly numerous.

Some well-informed Native gentlemen have so earnestly represented the closure of the natural outlets of the drainage in some of the districts near Calcutta, by reason of the many embanked roadways which have during late years been constructed, and from other causes, that I have decided to have the matter formally investigated by a specially selected committee.

The sanitary condition of the suburbs of Calcutta, though doubtless much ameliorated as compared with former times, is still very defective. Within the city limits of Calcutta itself the case is more favourable by reason of the supply of pure water and of the drainage works. The effect of the pure filtered water on the health, even on the lives, of the people is immediate and perceptible. The benefit of the drainage is less marked perhaps, but is still very real. Neither of these two cardinal improvements, however, have been carried to their full or legitimate extent, from want of funds. Moreover, there is a large number, hardly less than eight hundred, of tanks, with drains leading thereto, which are putrescent pools, and are nurseries of every physical plague that afflicts humanity.

The question regarding the selection of a site for the Medical College and Hospital in Calcutta has been so far solved in that a large committee, composed of all the best medical men in Calcutta, have recommended that the existing site be maintained, and that the necessary additions be constructed there. But although this decision has been fully adopted, the much-desired additions cannot be made from want of funds.

Mention was made on the last occasion of a project for establishing an industrial institution and colony in the Darjeeling hills for distressed Europeans and East Indians. But after much inquiry, and after personally inspecting several sites and localities for the purpose, I have been obliged reluctantly to abandon the project. Among many other objections there is this, that almost all the available lands in the Darjeeling district have been taken up for tea plantations, or cinchona plantations, or Government forest reserves ; and even if lands were obtainable, it seems very doubtful whether persons would come forward in any number to colonise them, that is, to reclaim and cultivate them by

their own labour. It is, moreover, doubtful whether the public would subscribe for the establishment of a colony, and it would be impossible for Government to take part in, or to become indirectly responsible for, the working of a colony, even if it could be constituted by private efforts.

The cyclone and storm-wave which on the night of the 31st October (1876) desolated both of the fertile shores of the estuary of the river Megna and the densely-peopled islands situate therein, is still vividly impressed on the memory of every one in Bengal.

It has been estimated that in an area of some 3,000 square miles, out of 1,062,000 persons suddenly thrown into more or less of danger 215,000 must have perished. This of course is only an estimate; the exact number cannot be known yet a while, perhaps never will be known. But I found on my visit to the spot that in some villages 30 per cent. of the inhabitants were lost, in others 50 per cent., in some even 70 per cent. The total of the estimated loss of life is frightful and shocking. I earnestly hope that it may be found to exceed the truth, and that the facts may not prove to be quite so dreadful. But no abatement that can possibly be made will deprive the disaster of its terrific proportions.

There was a severe cyclone in the Bay of Bengal on the night of the 31st October. But it was not the wind which proved so destructive, though that was terrible enough. It was the storm-wave, sweeping along to a height from 10 to 20 feet, according to different localities; in some places, where it met with any resistance, mounting even higher than that.

In the evening the weather was somewhat windy and hazy, and had been unusually hot; but the people retired to rest apprehending nothing. Before 11 o'clock the wind suddenly freshened, and about midnight there arose a cry of "the water is on us," and a great wave burst over the country several feet high. It was followed by another wave, and again by a third, all three waves rushing rapidly onwards, the air and wind being chilly cold. The people were thus caught up before they had time even to climb on to their roofs, and were lifted to the surface of the surging flood, together with the beams and thatches of their cottages. But the homesteads are surrounded by trees—palms, bamboos, and a large thorny species. The people were then borne by the water on to the tops and branches of these trees. Those

who were thus stopped were saved, those who were not, must have been swept away and were lost.

The bodies of the lost were carried to considerable distances, where they could not be identified. The corpses began to putrify before the water cleared off the grounds, so they were left unburied in numbers all over the country. Weather-tossed seamen in the Bay of Bengal saw many corpses floated out from land with the waves. Corpses were flung on to the seashore at Chittagong, and living persons were borne thither across an arm of the sea, clinging to the roofs or beams of their own houses, as if upon rafts.

Most of the local native officials were drowned,—Deputy Magistrates, Police Inspectors, Native Civil Judges, Notaries, and others. There were few resident landlords and few land agents on the spot. The villagers mostly consisted of cultivators with various kinds and degrees of tenures, and of subpropriators—a substantial yeomanry in fact—and they were the richest peasantry in all Bengal.

The loss of cattle, cows and bullocks, was utterly disastrous. Some part of the large herds of buffaloes was saved, these animals being excellent swimmers.

When the storm burst there was an abundant rice crop ripening for the harvest—the well-known deltaic rice crop, which is much beyond the needs of local consumption, and affords quantities (measured by thousands of tons annually) for exportation to distant districts. A part was lost, that in which the plant had not advanced beyond the stage of flowering, and a part was saved, that in which the grain had formed or begun to form. That which was saved is amply sufficient for the population now on the land.

Since the first few hours of inevitable destruction, not a life, so far as we can learn, had been lost from any preventable cause, nor has any one been in extreme danger. Those who perished in that fatal instant of time passed suddenly beyond aid; but those who then escaped are still sustained, or are sustaining themselves sufficiently well. The disaster, big though it be, has yet happened in the midst of plenty and of rural wealth. All around the fated and wasted area there are excellent crops and abundant stores. The local authorities acted with the utmost energy in giving temporary succour to the most distressed, in re-establishing social order, which had been suddenly broken up by the universality of the disaster, and in restoring public confidence. Those who have lost their agricultural wealth have still some

left, and doubtless possess considerable credit. Soon, therefore, will boats come pouring in by the numerous channels and creeks from districts teeming with water-carriage; soon will fresh cattle be swum or ferried across the rivers from the overstocked districts of Eastern Bengal; soon will the grain bazars be reopened, and the rustic marts be filled with the surplus produce of neighbouring tracts.

Fortunately cholera, although it has been sporadic all over Backergunge, did not break out in this district with overwhelming severity.

The above remarks refer more particularly to Noakholly proper, to Hattea, and to the Backergunge district, but not so much to the Sundeeep group of islands belonging to Noakholly. The habitations there, instead of being scattered in little hamlets, are towards the centre collected into large villages well protected by trees and (what was very important), having large tanks with high banks round them. Consequently, although towards the shores of the islands the people were swept off exactly in the manner I have described, yet towards the middle they for the most part escaped, as the wave was not relatively quite so high, and the trees were more efficiently protective, apparently checking the rapidity of the wave and allowing the poor people a few minutes of time, during which they crowded on to the banks of the tanks, and so kept their heads above water. On the outer villages towards the shores the mortality was quite as sad as anything that has been reported. In the inland villages it was fortunately less.

On the other hand, the storm-waves here came from the south, that is from seawards, and receding left the tanks and other drinking water brackish (instead of being fresh, as was happily the case in Hattea and in Backergunge), and caused the stagnant water, remaining after the wave had passed, to be foetid. Thus cholera set in soon after the first disaster. Then on the 23rd November there came a storm of wind and rain (the ghost, as it is called, of the cyclone), suddenly lowering the temperature of the atmosphere and sorely chilling the houseless people. This fresh misfortune aggravated the choleraic plague, and left the people in a state of deep depression. It seemed as if the survivors of the cyclone-wave would slowly perish by pestilence. Every arrangement which forethought could suggest has, however, been carried out by the local authorities. Native medical officers with medicines have been stationed at appropriate places, additional Native Doctors and Assistant Surgeons have been despatched from

Calcutta, the Sanitary Commissioner was deputed to the spot; still, notwithstanding all these exertions, the mortality from cholera has been very great, and in some places was expected to exceed even the mortality from inundation.

It may be asked whether any protective means against such calamities in future can be devised—any embankments or the like. This question will be duly considered; but at present I know not how to devise such safeguard, nor have I seen any one who can suggest anything. The area to be protected would be too great to be encompassed with protective works. If embankments became breached in such a storm, they would afterwards do more harm than good, for they would prevent or retard the running off and the subsidence of the waters. Perhaps the people might build perches for themselves on platforms and the like; but the trees which invariably surround the homesteads serve this purpose admirably, and it is to them that the survivors mainly owe their escape. Another means of protection would be the construction of a large mound some 30 feet high in the midst of each village, to which the people might fly on emergency. But this could hardly be managed unless the scattered hamlets should be much more concentrated into villages than at present; and it would involve a considerable change in the mode of habitation, a change in which the people would probably not acquiesce. They will, I fear, be found unwilling to undertake troublesome and expensive precautions, seeing that these disasters, though not unfrequent somewhere or other in a less severe form, do not visit the same locality in such intensity save at long intervals of time. Without specifying the exact date when the last event of such gravity befell the delta of the Megna—one case of this kind happened in 1822,—most people say that there has been nothing like the recent cataclysm since the middle of the last century.

VII. Instruction.

IN my report of the previous year a sketch was given of our educational system. During the year under review that system has been followed without any material change. I have therefore now to advert only to actual progress and results.

The number of scholars in all the schools supported, aided, or inspected by Government, is almost exactly 500,000, or half a million, which is equal to .8 per cent. on a population of 60½ millions,* and 5 per cent. on the children of a school-going age, assumed to be about 10 millions in number.

It is manifest, then, that the number of scholars, however large in itself, is but small relatively to the population; that a small space only in the great field has as yet been occupied; and that our efforts must never flag to extend our occupation over the ground still unoccupied. That such extension is possible enough, may be seen by noting the percentage in districts where education has most advanced, and estimating what the result would be if education were to be equally promoted in all other districts.

Our policy has been to treat all sorts of public instruction alike—primary, secondary, and superior; to foster as much as possible all kinds of education equally, from the very lowest to the very highest. It appears that opinions differ respecting the merits of the several kinds,—some inclining to favour the higher, some the lower. Our opinion is that all kinds, whether higher, middle, or lower, are excellent in their respective spheres, and that all have claims on the best offices that the State can render to them. We give our best services to all simultaneously, and try to avoid favouring any one of them at the expense of the others. I therefore conceive that if education should spread according to reasonable expectation, there ought to be at least 800,000 scholars at school within a very few years. And as so much depends on the exertions of the local authorities—the mind of the people being, in this respect, receptive of impulse from without—I have impressed this view upon every district officer throughout these provinces, with calculations made for each district.

The annual expenditure on education amounts in all to rather more than £400,000, of which something less than half, £190,000, is contributed by the people themselves, the remainder being defrayed by the State. It is, of course, very important to raise more and more money from the people for this purpose, as wealth and intelligence in so vast a population shall increase. The moral effect of the people forcing themselves to make sacrifices for a purpose in which their own

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prosperity is so much bound up will be excellent. Beyond all this, however, there is financial necessity. However anxious we may be to make the most liberal grants we can for education, still our State funds are tightly and narrowly limited. The provincial treasury gives all it can, but it cannot at present give more than is now given: indeed, it with difficulty maintains even the existing scale of educational grants. But with a people so numerous, and on the whole so prosperous, relatively to their wants and habits, it can hardly be difficult for them to augment their contribution. If £200,000 annually be taken as their present annual contribution, it is manifest that with an additional contribution of £100,000 a year the number of scholars might be increased by 50 per cent., that is might be raised from 500,000 to 750,000; and such an additional sum as £100,000 does not seem excessive for so all-important a purpose. This must, if it is to be received at all, come from the mass of the people. The zemindars and upper and middle classes generally do indeed evince a sense of the moral obligations which lie upon them in this matter, as is shown from the increase of schools of which the private income qualifies them to receive grants-in-aid from the State, and from the munificent donations given by individuals for the establishment of new colleges or high schools, such as those at Cuttack, Rajshahye, Rungpore, Chittagong, and for the resuscitation of the old college at Kishnagurh.

For the primary schools, which have 357,233 scholars, or 71 per cent. of the total number, we have adhered to the principle already laid down of keeping the standard of instruction as low as possible. The instruction does not go beyond reading merely—without any, even the simplest, book—rude writing, and rudimentary arithmetic. This instruction is the lowest possible, if there is to be any at all. Even this much is a gain to the poorest and humblest classes. It must be admitted, that they would be all the better from learning something more. All of them who have time or means for learning more are encouraged to do so; all those who cannot afford to learn more are still urged to learn even that minimum above described. Although all scholars, however poor and humble, in the primary schools, are stimulated to resort, if they can, to schools of a better class, still the lowest standard is maintained in the primary schools for the sake of scholars who are humbler and poorer

still, until nearly the whole mass of the poorest classes shall be drawn within the influence of some sort of instruction.

It seems to be supposed by some that because we strive to induce primary scholars to aim at something higher than the very lowest form of education, and because we establish intermediate schools (between the primary and the middle schools) for this purpose, which may afford steps whereby the poor scholars may ascend to the better walks of life, we therefore wish to raise the standard of primary instruction. Such a supposition, if really entertained, is quite opposed to the facts. Even though all the primary scholars should pass on to the intermediate schools, that is, to the next upper grade (a result much to be desired), still the lowest standard will be retained in the primary schools to attract those children who are now under no instruction at all. And this lowest standard ought always to be maintained until the fortunate time shall arrive when almost the whole of the poorest classes are under instruction. Then, and not till then, ought the lowest primary standard to be raised.

On the other hand, the proposition that all encouragement ought to be offered to every boy or girl who can be induced to attain something beyond the very lowest kind of instruction, is indisputable. And the success of the intermediate class of schools established for this purpose in 1875 proves that this purpose is appreciated by the people.

Again it seems to be supposed by some that because our system designedly provides the means whereby the poorest boy gifted with genius, beginning with the lowest primary standard, may move on from one grade of school to another, till at length he attains a high position in life, therefore we are trying to elevate the primary standard, thereby restricting its use and preventing its introduction among the poorest classes. This supposition also, if really entertained, is opposed to the facts.

The schools of secondary instruction, including the intermediate schools, are 1,833 in number, with 118,087 scholars. This division of our public instruction approaches more nearly towards success, perhaps, than any other, though we may not indeed affirm it to be successful. At the head of these schools stand the zillah schools established by Government at the head-quarters of each district. These schools have been termed the pride of Bengal, and are, with scarcely an exception, excellent and efficient institutions. In these schools, as well as in the aided and

private schools which teach a similar standard, candidates are prepared for the matriculation examination of the University. Below these are the middle schools, in some of which English is taught, while in others the instruction is confined to the vernacular. The best schools of this class are the Government vernacular schools, and next to them rank the Government Anglo-vernacular and the aided vernacular schools. The aided Anglo-vernacular schools are reported to be less efficient than any of the others—a result which is attributed to the lowness of the salaries which these schools are able to offer to their masters.

The superior instruction has received particular attention of late, indeed has caused us some anxiety. At the Calcutta University examination held in December 1875 for the entrance, the first arts, and the degrees, the candidates from Bengal failed in an unusually large proportion. The extent of failure was too remarkable to be accounted for by any of those fluctuations which at the best must be expected to happen occasionally. Moreover, the result coincided with the anticipations of public opinion, not only among Europeans capable of judging, but more especially among all those Natives who are able to take an impartial view of the subject. Most, perhaps all, educated natives of the old school declare that the English education is not now-a-days what it once was, as regards handwriting, elocution, composition, literary depth and force. Making allowance for these sentiments on the part of elders, who are apt to be *laudatores temporis acti*, I myself believe that there is some foundation for that opinion. Special inquiry has been made as to the causes of the falling off. Something must be due to increased strictness on the part of the examining authorities, in itself a very satisfactory cause, inasmuch as future candidates will be hereby compelled to make more strenuous efforts. Otherwise it is impossible to suppose that the students from so many schools and colleges could deteriorate so suddenly and so simultaneously. Much may be ascribed to the change which has been introduced, whereby candidates in English are examined not in any prescribed text-book, but in the language generally. This again is a satisfactory cause, as thereby future candidates will be compelled to study the language itself rather than to learn by rote any single book. Something may be attributable to the difficulty of maintaining at the necessary strength a staff of talented and accomplished teachers and

professors. In past years the teaching staff has been fortunate in possessing a galaxy, as it were, of talent, both in the literary and the scientific branches. Sickness and death have unhappily been busy among these gifted and distinguished men. The number of our scholastic institutions having increased, the demand for such men becomes wider. The English universities are the only source from which we can be sure of obtaining them. But the prospects of our educational department do not seem to be so attractive as might be hoped to men who have run a good university career. Thus, although we never cease endeavouring to obtain through the Secretary of State the services of highly qualified men from England, and although some eminent men are engaged, still the difficulty has become aggravated of maintaining the teaching power in the higher branches in sufficient strength for the larger area which has now to be occupied. Hence we need hardly feel surprise if the natives in their disappointment find fault with their teachers. But if (as sometimes seems to be the case,) they cast the whole of the blame on their teachers and none upon themselves, they will be merely laying to their disappointed souls the unction of self-deception; for undoubtedly there has often been a want of that steadfast resolve to dive to the bottom of every subject, to drive knowledge into the brain and to write it on the heart, which alone can make successful students. This defect again is partly the result of system, or rather deficiency of system. So long as superficial or imperfect study shall prove to be remunerative, shall suffice to win the rewards of life, it alone, and nothing beyond it, will be attempted by students. Now, proficiency of a second-rate or a third-rate kind has too often been accepted as a passport to lucrative employment. There are indeed many youths who will follow knowledge for her own sake alone. Would that there were more and more of them! But it were vain to hope that the majority of students at the present time will carry their studies beyond the point which may secure a livelihood. Such youths will naturally doubt whether they should enter the university, or take degrees if they have entered, when they can earn their living without doing any of these things. But of late we have been refusing to accept even the passing of the entrance examination as a qualification for the higher grades of the public service, and have insisted on degrees being taken. It is to this, more than to anything else, that I look for a safeguard against a recurrence of the

failures in the higher education which have just been described. In Bengal the standard enforced for the public service dominates practically all other standards. It is perhaps well that this should be so. This very cardinal circumstance, however, augments the responsibility of the State for enforcing strictness, even severity, in the tests for admission to the public service. It has been therefore ruled that the possession of an university degree shall be demanded from all candidates for superior appointments in the service of Government. If then the standard for degrees shall be high and appropriate, and if the examination shall be strict, it necessarily follows that all candidates will really qualify themselves by sound education, and that the highest instruction will be diffused much more than it has heretofore been. Already this policy is asserting itself in the growing aspiration among the Bengalee youth for the higher ranges of knowledge. Its fruits will doubtless become richer hereafter. For although the young Bengalees will often be superficial so long as superficiality is found sufficient for success in life, although they will often continue to be deficient so long as deficiency does not debar them from that success—yet as soon as they discover that their paramount purpose can no longer be served in this way, and that their goal can be reached only with solidity and profundity of knowledge, then they will become both solid and profound in their learning. Such will be their conduct, unless I misread their national character. The struggle for subsistence among the educated classes of Bengal, among those who can work with their brains only and not with their hands, is daily becoming harder and sharper. Thus there is a masterful motive at one moment spurring them on to those efforts which are put forth with the sweat of the brow in its highest sense, at another time drilling and breaking them into patient assiduity, and at all times exercising that power of intense mental application which is one of the strong parts of their disposition.

We have still to lament the slow progress made with instruction in the practical sciences. The youth of Bengal are still flocking too exclusively to two overstocked professions, the law and the public service; although other professions are fast expanding, connected with civil and mechanical engineering, with medicine, chemistry, botany, geology,—professions which might well be filled by them if properly trained and qualified, and which will otherwise be filled, to their detriment, by others. It is in respect of mechanical

engineering that our regret most arises. New industries are springing up in Bengal, bounding and striding forward, and starting from mechanical appliances. Machinery is entering into various operations formerly conducted with hand labour. Hence there must be a growing demand for educated mechanics. But the young Bengalees do not seem as yet to care for the practical study of mechanics. Doubtless public attention has been roused to these considerations, and even that is something appreciable. We may hope that by continually hammering the anvil of argument on this topic we may produce some conviction in the public mind, and that by constantly offering the means of instruction we may induce young Bengalees to come forward with minds set on learning the art and mastering the business. It is melancholy to see men, who once appeared to receive their honours in the university convocation, now applying for some lowly-paid appointment, almost begging from office to office, from department to department, or struggling for the practice of a petty practitioner, and after all this returning baffled and disheartened to a poverty-stricken home, and then to reflect how far happier their lot might have been had they, while at school or college, been able to move in a healthier atmosphere of thought and freer walks of life. Nevertheless, with these examples before their eyes, hundreds, perhaps thousands of young men, persist in embarking on the same course, which can lead only to the same sad ending. And one reason, among several reasons, is this, that they still dread and dislike the thought of manual work, even though it be accompanied with mental training. This unhappy prejudice, though not perhaps avowed nor even admitted, is palpably existent and banefully influential.

Some progress, however, is being made in this direction : schools for surveying have been established ; some industrial schools have been commenced, though as yet with indifferent success ; civil engineering is taught in the colleges, with moderate results only ; a school of forestry is just about to be established—we dare not yet be sanguine regarding it ; projects for three scientific and technical institutions on a scale of some pretension have been framed by the natives themselves (two at Calcutta and one at Patna), and large subscriptions have been promised or paid. These constitute efforts made spontaneously and independently by the natives themselves, and are so far hopeful signs in the present time ; but whether these institutions will really be set in motion and

brought into working order remains to be seen. The only special branch in which anything like success is attained consists of medicine and surgery, and students are crowding the medical institutions in Calcutta, in Eastern Bengal, in Behar, and in Orissa.

We are in communication with the University of Calcutta with a view to making such modifications in the science course as shall relieve the undergraduates from some subjects of a general character which are not absolutely necessary, and shall enable them to devote their minds to those particular sciences in which they are to take degrees, and in which they must acquire the knowledge whereby they are to earn a livelihood hereafter.

The expense bestowed by the State upon high education in Bengal has often been jealously scrutinized. Instances have been fastened upon in which, from special or local circumstances, the cost has been unavoidably excessive. And it seems to be supposed by many that this superior instruction absorbs an undue share of the assistance which the Government is able to give to education, and that the students in our colleges are trained at the public cost with little or no expense to themselves.

If there were any foundation for this belief, it would not be difficult to adduce arguments by which such a system could be defended. It might be urged that the great majority of our students are poor; that they are not assisted, to the same extent as in England, by private exhibitions and benefactions; and that to subject a large number of Bengali youths to the influences of the highest education was an interesting and important experiment, to which the funds of the State might very properly be applied. It might have been the case that such youths would have created an original national literature, or would have been distinguished for inventive power in the practical sciences. It could not be denied that such an experiment was worth trying, and upon such grounds as these it might be argued that the Government was justified in taking upon itself a larger share of the cost of college instruction than it contributes to other grades of public education.

The supposition, however, that the higher education either receives or requires such exceptional treatment is altogether erroneous. The Government has generally accepted the principle that it will bear one-half of the cost of instruction in schools of all grades; and if this proportion is exceeded in the case of some colleges, it is also exceeded

in some schools. But out of 1,250 collegiate students in Bengal, about two-thirds are inmates of institutions in which the Government contribution does not amount to so much as one-half of the total expenditure. In the largest and most successful college of all—the Presidency College in Calcutta—the receipts from fees and private sources exceed the amount of the Government grant. It is thus clear that collegiate instruction is not unduly pampered at the expense of the general tax-payer: it is not an exotic needing to be fostered by hotbed treatment, but a thriving plant, vigorous by its own strength, and deriving its support from those classes of the community who enjoy the benefits which it produces.

Among the many regrets which must be felt by any earnest or candid observer of the results of our public instruction, is the reflection that female education is still so backward. There is, indeed, reason to think that this education is more widely diffused than it would appear to be from official reports. Many, perhaps most, native ladies of the higher classes receive domestic instruction from their fathers or their husbands, and are thus in some measure educated, though they may never have attended school. In some of the eastern districts this domestic instruction assumes a more organized form, and zenana associations exist for the purpose both of teaching and of testing the progress of the learners. But it is discouraging to find that the middle classes of native society, though they are ready to acknowledge the advantages of female education, and are not unwilling that their wives and daughters should be instructed, do not value such instruction sufficiently to be willing to pay for it. Even in Calcutta, where European influence and example are more felt than elsewhere, female schools can only attract pupils by offering education at a scale of charges disproportionately low. An honourable exception to the general indifference is shown by the Brahmo community, among whom female education is not only tolerated, but receives active and adequate support.

We have founded a picture gallery in connection with the School of Art in Calcutta. It has not, however, received substantial encouragement from the public. The Native students show aptitude as well as industry, and seem to understand how many fields of lucrative employment may be opened to them by artistic culture.

The important subject of the education of the European and East Indian youths in this country claims some notice

here. The instruction afforded to these classes by the colleges and superior schools, which are private institutions aided by Government, is fairly good, and is, after allowance shall have been made for the disadvantages incidental to the country, creditable both to the State and to the community. We have made all reasonable efforts, by subsidizing the many institutions existing both in Calcutta and in the interior of the country, to bring under instruction all the European and East Indian children who, though of a school-going age, are not at school. Some good in this direction has been effected. Still, unhappily, the number of neglected children, not sent to school, is relatively large, amounting to more than a thousand. In respect to State aid, I hardly see how we could properly go further than we have gone; and I begin to fear that some law for compulsory education may ultimately have to be enacted.

The Bengalee vernacular drama continues to flourish. It is in the main distinguished by moral and literary excellence; it affords mental exercise and rational diversion to a susceptible, quick-witted, and impressionable generation. Its legitimate development may well be encouraged. It has, however, of late been occasionally disfigured by the production of plays which reflected unjustifiably on private character, and which evinced grave disrespect towards many things and institutions which are most esteemed and revered. There being manifest objections to making attempts at checking the mischief by the existing legal procedure, which attempts might or might not prove successful, it was resolved by the Government of India first to pass an ordinance empowering the local Government to repress such plays, and then to pass a law to the same effect, entitled the Dramatic Performances' Act. These measures were immediately successful; neither have the objectionable plays been repeated, nor have any fresh plays of this evil character been produced. Some objections were at first raised to the repressive measure, mainly from misapprehension. The repression itself is entirely supported by the moral sense of the best part of the Native community, who, indeed, treated the plays with all the reprobation that was deserved.

In last year's report I described the characteristics of the Bengalee Vernacular Press. There is little to be added now save this, that the disposition to complain of every thing which exists under the present circumstances of the country has increased rather than diminished. An

unreasoning querulousness of tone is often perceptible, which may excite our regrets, because it can do nothing but harm to those who adopt it. I also mentioned the very natural tendency of the Bengalees to urge their just claims to a full share in all the best things which the system of British rule can afford. This tendency also is increasing; and so far from causing any regret, it deserves our sympathy. The mind of all the more intelligent classes of the people (and these are many) is awaking to a sense of the varied rights to which men are entitled under a firm, humane, and enlightened administration. This disposition will be productive of good ultimately, although at present it may cause an apparently unreasonable degree of fault-finding not only with the system pursued by Government, but also with the bearing and conduct of its officers. For the more do the people turn their thoughts to this subject, the more will they perceive the perfect and absolute justice which the British Government follows, the more will they see the pure light in which the Government strives to walk, the more will they understand the countless blessings which its subjects of all creeds and races enjoy. Again, the inclination of the Bengalees to think more highly of themselves intellectually than they ought to think, is becoming fixed. Although from some points of view this is to be regretted, still it will stimulate them in making those strenuous efforts mentally of which they are so eminently capable. On the whole, I venture to affirm that the many superficial faults which are discernible in the utterances and demeanour of the people in Bengal must not for a moment be mistaken for signs of disloyalty, for really nothing is further than this (as I believe) from their inner mind and intentions. At heart, and in the truest and best sense, the Bengalees are thoroughly loyal. In this respect there are not in all British India better subjects of the Crown. And under all circumstances, adverse or propitious, they evince a steady, industrious, and law-abiding spirit, which must command regard and esteem from every Englishman who knows them. Their sentiments of respect for the British nation, and of reverence for the British Crown, will have been enhanced by the State ceremonies instituted for proclaiming the imperial title, and by the honours bestowed on so many of their leading men during the imperial assemblage at Dehli.

RICHARD TEMPLE.

REPORT

ON THE

ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL, 1875-76

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1875-76.

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ADMINISTRATION OF BENGAL, 1875-76.

I.—PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

Changes of Administration.

It may be said again of the past as of the previous year that the record is one of general progressive improvement. In all departments a vigilant administration has been exercised with particular reference to consolidation, and but few important changes, either executive or legislative, have been introduced. At the same time there has been a considerable advance in the general administration, and in many departments, it will be seen from the pages of this report, that progress has been very rapid. Especially has vigorous action been taken in the departments relating to the administration of the land and the rent law, and in the direction of acquiring statistics and a more accurate knowledge of the country and its people. Sir Richard Temple has been Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal throughout the whole of the period under review.

The history of the Administration of Bengal during the year will be found in the ensuing chapters of this report. In the present chapter allusion will be made to those general topics many of which are of the highest importance but for which no place is found elsewhere, and which, in accordance with the practice of previous years, have been considered in the introductory chapter of the report devoted to "Changes of Administration."

The most important topic of local interest during the year was undoubtedly the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to India during the last cold weather; and if anything had been wanted to assure the Government of the loyalty of the people at large in Bengal, it would have been found in the manner in which the Prince of Wales was welcomed by all classes. It was naturally the case that the excitement was most marked among the upper and the upper middle classes. Even in the remote districts of Chittagong the visit of His Royal Highness created a sensation and interest, and many

Visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to India.

of the well-to-do portion of the native community flocked to Calcutta to see the Prince and the splendour of his reception. At the other extremity of the Bengal province also, in Orissa, it is reported that there were similar manifestations of loyalty, and that these have certainly tended to bring the British Government nearer to the hearts of the people. A good many zemindars, and others who could afford the journey, went to Calcutta to be present at the Prince's arrival; and foremost amongst these was the Rajah of Pooree, who for the first time in history crossed the sea. Besides the passing displays which are usual on occasions of national rejoicing, and which on this great occasion were distinguished by the highest degree of cordiality and enthusiasm, the wealthier natives of all classes both in Bengal and Behar have raised large subscriptions to commemorate the event by founding educational institutions and by promoting other works of public usefulness; so that the visit of His Royal Highness will leave its mark of permanent beneficence on the country.

The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to be able to report that, notwithstanding the unsettled relations which exist in many parts of Eastern Bengal between landlord and tenant, there have not been the same serious agrarian disturbances arising out of them that have been chronicled in previous years. An unfortunate recent outbreak has, however, taken place at Furreedpore since the close of the past official year. It is but too true that there is the same feeling existing among the zemindars that has been before brought to notice, that they are not getting their fair share of the increased value of the produce of the land, and there is the same uncertainty as to the best way of asserting their claims, which has been gradually growing upon them. There is the same spirit of independence, and the same determination to resist enhancement among the ryots. The merits of the question are most difficult, but they have received anxious attention from competent authorities on all sides, and the Lieutenant-Governor earnestly hopes that the adoption of sound and recognised principles to guide the courts in the determination of rent suits, and in the settlement of many long-standing differences, will shortly be settled by legislation. The Lieutenant-Governor would also observe that there is much truth in the remark of the Commissioner of the tract of country mostly concerned, that intervention at the right time on the part of the authorities in actual personal communication with the parties will often do more good than all the civil court decrees that can be obtained; and it is satisfactory to be able to say that in several cases the personal influence of the revenue officer, discreetly exercised, has brought alarming disputes to an amicable termination.

When the Lieutenant-Governor was preparing the Bill for transferring to the revenue officers the jurisdiction in rent disputes under circumstances where agrarian disturbances might be threatened, it was represented that the Bill did no more than provide an effective procedure in cases of trouble, and contributed nothing towards the determination of the principles which should guide the local authorities in

Relations between landlord and tenant in Eastern Bengal.

Proposed further amendment of the rent law in Bengal with regard to the determination of the principles on which the rent of land should be fixed.

deciding these disputes: in other words, that the Bill related to procedure only, leaving the substantive law respecting rent and the relations between landlord and tenant exactly where it has heretofore been. Sir Richard Temple, however, desired to take up immediately the question of procedure and jurisdiction, as being necessary for the prevention of agrarian disturbances, which might at any moment threaten to arise. It was intended advisedly to avoid joining with this comparatively summary consideration the questions which are frequently agitated regarding rent and regarding landlord and tenant, inasmuch as these questions are in Bengal perhaps the most difficult of any that can be raised, and must, if touched at all, occupy a long time and cause protracted deliberation, and might even after all that fail to be met by a satisfactory solution. It was not expedient to defer rendering the procedure effective in circumstances of possible trouble and urgency until the Government could achieve the as yet uncertain result of revising such an important law as the rent law.

Still, many zemindars in Bengal are anxious that something more definite than anything which is now prescribed should be laid down by law regarding the determination of the landlord's share in the produce of the land or in the profits of the cultivation; and some of our best revenue officers hold a similar opinion. It is much more difficult to gauge the views of the ryots or the tenant class; but so far as can be gathered from indications of their views, it seems probable that they entertain a similar wish. The apprehension seems to be gradually gaining ground that sooner or later there will be more or less of contest between landlord and tenant as to the principles on which the rate or amount of rent should be determined. It is expected that such contest may begin in Eastern Bengal and then spread to other places. Those who entertain this apprehension seem frequently to think that as these principles are but vaguely indicated in the existing law embodied in Act X of 1859 and Act VIII of 1869 they ought to be laid down by a new law, and that by such means alone can the relations between landlord and tenant in Bengal be peacefully settled. No doubt it would be very desirable to determine suitable rules by law, especially as tenant-right is growing so fast in Bengal, and as the occupancy tenure is extending year by year to larger and larger numbers of ryots and cultivators.

It is not only that opinions conflict greatly upon the subject, but that local customs differ considerably. As shown in last year's Administration Report, the really difficult class of disputes arises in reference to the question whether the value of the land and its produce has increased otherwise than through the agency, or at the expense, of the ryot. All that was urged there was that when such disputes assume serious proportions, likely to cause agrarian trouble, the revenue authorities are in a much better position than the civil courts can possibly be to settle such disputes peaceably, and in some degree satisfactorily; and that, as things are, the only chance of obviating trouble is to vest the Collectors with powers accordingly. If they decide that under the circumstances the landlord is entitled to some increase, they will test his demand by the counter-representations of the ryots, and after taking every care that moderation is observed towards the cultivator, they will generally

be able to fix upon some rate which the ryots are prepared to pay and which the landlord will accept. In this way an equitable compromise will in most cases be made. Still it must be admitted that the Collectors must often have some difficulty in defining the path which should lead them through the various considerations towards that conclusion. It is easy, perhaps, to decide that the value of the land has increased otherwise than through the agency or expense of the ryot. But then the questions present themselves, how much has it increased? to what share in such increase is the landlord entitled? if it be that his share in the increase ought to be the same as his share in the original profit of the cultivation, then what was that share? if the facts show such share to have been indeterminate, then how is it to be determined?

The proposals that have been made with a view to legislation on these difficult and delicate problems may be thus summarised:—

Summary of proposals.

1st.—That a Bill be introduced as supplementary to Act VIII (B.C.) of 1869 for the further laying down of principles whereby rents should be decided between the landlords and the occupancy ryots as defined by the Act.

2nd.—That this supplementary legislation be confined to occupancy ryots (who now form a large portion, perhaps the majority, of ryots), leaving non-occupancy ryots, or tenants-at-will, to the operation of the existing law.

3rd.—That in cases of dispute the rent of the occupancy ryot should be fixed at rates less by at least 25 per cent. than the rates ordinarily paid by non-occupancy ryots in the neighbourhood or in the district.

4th.—That even more favourable rates should be allowed to old occupancy ryots, who had (either of themselves or by those from whom they inherited) held their lands thirty years and more.

5th.—That the ordinary rates payable by non-occupancy ryots should be ascertained by evidence in the usual way, but that if from any cause this ascertainment should be found impracticable, then the Collector should be directed to ascertain, or if he failed, then the rent of a non-occupancy ryot should be calculated at one-fifth (20 per cent.) of the value of the gross produce as the basis for determining the rent of an occupancy ryot, the result of which would be that an occupancy ryot's rent, calculated on that basis, and being at least 25 per cent. less, would be 15 per cent. of the value of the gross produce.

These proposals have been exposed to criticism, and it is evident that they will to some extent have to be modified before they can be passed into law. It is doubtful

Objections.

whether the proposition to extend specially the favourable rates to old occupancy ryots, who have held their lands for thirty years or more, can be carried out under the circumstances of the country. This proposal has been highly approved by a large class of ryots and by gentlemen, both European and Native, who interest themselves in the cause of the ryot. But what with the difficulty of establishing these periods of occupancy, and the temptation that will be afforded to an undue degree of litigation, and the extreme difficulty there would evidently be of obtaining the consent, or anything like the consent, of the landlord class to any

such conditions, there is reason to fear that the proposal is, under the present circumstances of the country, impracticable. This is much to be regretted, because if carried out it would have done a great deal to improve the status of the ryot without unduly detracting from the status of the zemindar.

Then great objections have been made to the determination of the rent of occupancy ryots by reference to the rates which are paid by non-occupancy ryots. It is commonly said that there is not any perceptible difference between the rates of occupancy and non-occupancy ryots; and the Lieutenant-Governor is not himself convinced on the point; but the authority of many well-informed persons, and of the large number of landlords who compose the British Indian Association, pronounces that there is a difference between the rates paid by occupancy ryots and non-occupancy ryots. Even if no such difference exist the principles laid down in the Bill will benefit the occupancy ryot, because there will be no chance of his rent being enhanced. He may not be able to obtain an abatement of rent, because the Bill provides that there will be no abatement claimed under it; but there is no chance of his rent being enhanced. And this remarkable protection he will enjoy in virtue of a rule proposed by the largest society of landlords in the country. Thus this proposal, even in such extreme cases, will not be found so unworkable as some authorities seem to think.

Another proposal amounts to this, that the landlord's share may be taken at 15 per cent. of the value of the gross produce. Now, the landed interest affirm that this is much too low. On the whole the Lieutenant-Governor believes that this would not be too low in some parts of the country. It would be too low, however, in other parts of the country, especially Western Bengal, perhaps also in Central Bengal, and it may be necessary to allow some higher proportion to be taken. In reference to this it is proposed that the proportion shall range from 15 to 25 per cent. on the value of the gross produce.

Further, in the course of inquiry it appears that some increased, some enlarged definition, will have to be made of the term occupancy ryot; for it is found that the term occupancy ryot has got to be applied in some parts of the country to a class of persons who may be described almost as tenure-holders—that is to say, there is a class of occupancy ryots who hold considerable tenures, which tenures they sublet to other ryots, who hold from father to son, and who apparently may claim all the benefits of Act VIII of 1869, who are indeed in all respects virtually occupancy ryots. They really are middlemen or tenure-holders. Nevertheless these so-called middlemen are, by common acceptance of official terms, called occupancy ryots. That is a state of things which will require consideration at the hands of the legislature. Inquiries that have been made have brought out into very strong relief the grievances which have been long known to exist regarding the realization of rent. The zemindars affirm now what they have always affirmed, but more than ever now, that if the law is to be amended, there should be some provision for the more speedy realization, not of disputed, but of undisputed rents.

Looking to all these vararious considerations, the Lieutenant-Governor decided to make a revised proposition, the salient points of which may be summarised as follows:—

Revised proposition
finally accepted by Govern-
ment.

1st.—That in cases where an occupancy ryot is liable to enhancement of rent under section 18 of Act VIII (B.O.) of 1869, such enhancement is either to be regulated by the principle that his rent shall be less than the ordinary rent of a non-occupancy ryot by a certain percentage, from 20 to 25 per cent., or else is to be calculated on a certain proportion of the value of the gross produce, from 15 to 25 per cent.: provided always that no occupancy ryot shall be entitled to claim under the foregoing rule any abatement from the rent which he has heretofore paid.

2nd.—The definition of an occupancy ryot, as given in section 6 of Act VIII (B.O.) of 1869, to be somewhat extended, so as to include ryots cultivating under other ryots in certain classes of cases.

3rd.—The right and interest of an occupancy ryot to be rendered liable to sale for default in paying rent, and also transferable by private agreement.

4th.—The process for realizing arrears of rent in undisputed cases to be simplified by the court or other deciding authority being empowered, on application from the landlord, to issue a notice to the ryot requiring him either to pay or to appear and show cause to the contrary. In the event of the ryot neither paying nor appearing, the court to order attachment and sale of the defaulter's movable property.

5th.—The rents payable by tenure-holders or others possessing a permanent transferable interest in land, intermediate between the proprietor of an estate and the ryot, when not fixed by special agreement or by the circumstances of the tenures, to be determined according to a standard similar to that of the occupancy ryots, but more favourable by 10 per cent.

To these propositions, and to the measures as thus embodied in this abstract, the general assent of the Government of India has been obtained.

One particular objection has been raised regarding the proposal

The proportion that the
landlord's rent should bear
to the value of gross pro-
duce.

for fixing the landlord's share at a certain proportion of the value of the gross produce, varying from 15 to 25 per cent., namely that no such rule can work, because in some parts of the country, as in Western Bengal, the landlords are already receiving much more than 25 per cent. of the value of the gross produce, and in other parts of the country, especially towards the more remote parts of Eastern and deltaic Bengal, the landlords are receiving much less. In Western Bengal they are said to be getting even as much as 50 per cent., and in some parts of Eastern Bengal only one-fortieth of the produce—or, in other words, almost nothing at all. Now, in consequence of this extreme disparity, it is contended that no such proposed rule can possibly work. But notwithstanding this difference, it may possibly work. For instance, where the landlord is receiving more than 25 per cent., he and his tenantry are left absolutely untouched. There will be of course no immediate claim for enhancement allowed under the

rule. The landlord will not be injured, nor will the tenant be benefited, because the Bill will contain a provision to the effect that there shall be no abatement in consequence of the provisions of the Bill. It may be that the Bill will give the landlord no assistance in making further enhancement—at least not for a considerable period; not until there shall be some very extensive improvement in the cultivation, or extension of new produce, or a very great rise in prices. But for the present, no doubt, the effect will be that landlords who are getting more than 25 per cent. will get no further increase; and it is doubtful whether they ought to get more under such circumstances. If any landlord does get much more than 25 per cent. he is very lucky, because he gets more than he ought to be receiving in the opinion of many authorities; and in the other case, in which the landlord is receiving much less than 15 per cent., it often happens that the ryot must be paying a nominal or peppercorn rent for some reason or other, because the land has been recently reclaimed or thrown up by a river, or something of that sort. Possibly there may be some tacit agreement between him and his landlord: perhaps the payment of a large *salami*, or bonus, on the understanding that full rent would not be demanded afterwards. Now, if there has been any tacit agreement, or anything like the payment of a *salami* in consideration of a rent being kept at a nominal rate, then that is an agreement; and the Bill will provide that nothing in the Act shall interfere with any existing agreement, whether direct or indirect, and so on. But if the ryot is in fact paying nothing more than a nominal or peppercorn rent, then sooner or later he will have to pay a real rent; and if he has to pay any rent at all, then 15 per cent. is a very moderate proportion. It would be impossible to say that if a man has been so fortunate as not to pay any rent in the past, therefore for the future he should not have to pay. There might indeed be the question whether he had been paying the extremely low rent for twenty years and upwards; and there is a provision in the existing law that if a man has been paying a certain rent for twenty years, it is a great presumption in his favour. But if he has paid only a nominal rent for some lesser period than twenty years without any particular agreement, then it is impossible to maintain him in the position of holding an almost rent-free tenure.

It should be added that, in reference to the occupancy rent rate being fixed with reference to the non-occupancy rent rate, some people consider there should be a provision for reference being made to the Collector to decide what should be deemed the average rent rate of the district, or part of a district, for the purposes of this Act. If the great landlord interest should concur in the suggestion, and the Council should agree to put in such a provision, then the Government could have no possible objection. Sir Richard Temple is of opinion that the thing might be well managed; that the Collector could be called upon to inquire and to lay down an average ordinary rent rate for each district. Such proceedings might be taken under the supervision of the Commissioners and the Board of Revenue, and it is believed that the rates thus ascertained would be tolerably satisfactory. There may be cases in which the parties could show the court that particular lands could not be assessed on the average rate. In that case there

would have to be that sort of inquiry which does frequently have to be made locally by the courts of justice; otherwise, the average rate would be applicable.

Again, in proceeding to apply the rule of proportion, the value of the gross produce will be taken upon the value of that produce of an ordinary kind, meaning rice and other cereals, which may be considered as the ordinary produce of the land of Bengal. Other kinds of produce indeed are already increasing, and may increase more, particularly tobacco, mulberry, opium, indigo, jute, and safflower. But there is this to be considered, that the landlord's share, which is calculated on the proportion of the value of the produce which would be considered fair as regards common produce like rice, would be deemed to be too high as regards such higher kinds of staples which are generally thought to require more skill, capital, and labour on the part of the ryot. Even in the most favourable cases it is believed the zemindar will admit that he cannot get so large a share of the gross produce from these superior crops as from produce of the common kinds. That will involve the difficulty of having two sets of proportions—one for the common produce, another for the superior staples. This is a real difficulty. But if it cannot be overcome in any other way it must be overcome by fixing two proportions—one for common kinds of produce, and one for other crops. Another plan is that the proportion should be made up as an ordinary proportion for common crops, with a proviso that something should be added in the case of land being cultivated with certain superior crops, which would be specified in the Act.

Objections have been raised by the Government of India to the third proposition, regarding the right and interest of an occupancy ryot being rendered liable to sale for default in paying rent, and also transferable by private agreement. It will depend upon the advice the Lieutenant-Governor may receive from the most experienced gentlemen in Bengal, and also upon what he may find to be the opinions of his Council, whether he will make a further representation to the Government of India on the subject. There are a great many apparently strong reasons for putting forth this proposition. And the Lieutenant-Governor believes it will certainly not injuriously affect the ryot, but quite the contrary; that while it conduces to the convenience of the zemindar, it will, on the other hand, give a greatly enhanced value to occupancy tenures throughout these provinces.

The fifth proposition does not require detailed comment. The existence of these very important tenure-holders or middlemen is fully recognized. The Lieutenant-Governor has been advised on the best authority that nothing is necessary; that their position is either fixed by individual agreement or lease, or determined by law; and he still believes that this description is applicable to the great majority of these tenures. But many tenure-holders have individually represented to him that their cases are not recognized either by law or by any particular bill, and therefore they would like to have something inserted

Sale of right and interest in occupancy tenures in default of payment of rent.

Rights and position of intermediate tenure-holders.

in the law for their protection. It is therefore suggested that in such cases they may be placed in the same position as occupancy ryots with a beneficial percentage of (say) 10 per cent.

The Lieutenant-Governor cannot but say that he feels very earnestly the necessity for some legislation, for some rule being fixed, in reference to the determination of rents. There is an improvement at present in the relations between landlord and tenant, and the

Importance of fixing some rule in reference to the determination of rents.

agrarian disturbances of two or three years ago have died away. With the exception of one sad individual case in the Furreedpore district there is no indication of agrarian troubles arising anywhere. But there is still a very uneasy feeling lying deep in the hearts and minds both of landlords and tenants. There is a certain sort of underground agitation going on, and which goes on because Government has no proper means of stopping it. This agitation arises because neither party knows whether or not rents can be enhanced. Now, there are many persons who think that the best way is to leave things alone—to let landlords and tenants fight it out, and that the result probably would be that rents would remain absolutely unchanged. The Lieutenant-Governor must say definitely that he entirely dissents from that view. It is impossible to prevent cases arising regarding enhancement of rent. That such enhancement of rents should be possible is distinctly contemplated by the existing law of Bengal, which lays down precise provisions with the view of what shall happen when such a thing takes place. Therefore it is too late

Enhancement of rent inevitable.

to say that enhancement of rent should be out of the question. Sir Richard Temple desires and hopes to see a contented and prosperous peasantry, the ryots having heritable tenures handed down from generation to generation with proper equitable rents which cannot be enhanced except by the decision of a court of justice, and with full security of enjoying the fruits of their labour and a full share of the general advantages which arise from a secure and settled Government. But, on the other hand, it never was contemplated that there should be no such thing as enhancement of rent. However much it may be stated in the permanent settlement that the rights of under-tenures should be protected, it never was asserted that there should be a special and perpetual sub-settlement with the ryots. Nor was it ever suggested that the old pergunnah rent rates, though taken as a guide, should not be open to alteration or to augmentation as time went on. What these pergunnah rates ought to be was never settled. If the intention had been to make such a settlement, the Government of the time would have provided for it; and it could only have been done by a regular settlement of rents throughout the country. If the value of land is to increase with the rise of prices and the improvement of produce, it seems to follow that there must be a gradual, though moderate, augmentation of rent throughout the country from time to time—enough to satisfy the demands of the landlord, while leaving a clear and liberal margin of profit to the ryot.

In short, if the material resources of the country are to go on growing; if the culture of new staples is to flourish—the jute of yesterday,

as it were, the tobacco of to-day, the flax, as we hope, of to-morrow—if the use of machinery is to spread, not only around the presidency towns, but also throughout the interior of the country; if all this is to continue happening, it must be followed by an augmentation of rent, equitable and moderate doubtless, allowing also for a stable and valuable occupancy status accruing to the ryot, but still augmentation. This is a necessary outcome of the improvement of the country. If the country is to advance, rents will rise concurrently; and having regard to this inevitable circumstance, legislation must be prepared accordingly. The augmentation of rent will never be managed satisfactorily to the two parties concerned—will be nothing but a bone of contention between them, unless some legislation shall be effected whereby the courts and the parties can know how, and on what principle, the augmentation should be regulated. By putting off legislation, the evil day is only deferred until disputes begin and men's passions become excited and settlement becomes more and more difficult.

The argument may be summed up thus. If there is to be enhancement in any class of cases, it virtually cannot be without a decree of court, because although the rent of a tenant-at-will can be enhanced without such decree, some persons say that there is no such class existing any longer: they have all, or nearly all, become occupancy ryots. Those classes, such as korfa, ootbundi, and the like, are said to be not tenants at all, and to be little more than farm-labourers, though this view of their status may be open to dispute. Probably, however, the great majority of ryots are in such a position that their rents cannot be enhanced without a decree of court. The existing law, no doubt, does lay down the circumstances under which there may be cases for enhancement, which are mentioned in section 18 of Act VIII of 1869. There are three circumstances under which cases arise for enhancement in the case of a ryot having a right of occupancy: (1) that the rate of rent paid by such ryots is below the prevailing rate payable by the same class of ryots for land of a similar description, and with similar advantages, in the places adjacent; (2) that the value of the produce, or the productive powers of the land, have been increased otherwise than by the agency or at the expense of the ryot; (3) that the quantity of the land held by the ryot has been proved by measurement to be greater than the quantity for which rent has been previously paid by him. But this law only lays down the circumstances under which enhancement of rent may be possible. Granted that the ryot is paying less than others; granted that the value of the land has been increased by causes other than his own exertions; granted that he is holding more land than is set down to his name: these are the circumstances only which would justify some enhancement of rent. Still there is nothing in them whatever to show how the enhancement should be adjusted; there is nothing to show what are the data, what are the principles, upon which the court should proceed in its adjudication. How is enhancement to be settled? As to that there is positively nothing. The courts have elaborated what is called the rule of proportion—that rule which, in default of anything better, the highest tribunal has tried to frame as the best rule which could be

made under the unsatisfactory condition of the law. The rule is that the new rent should bear the same proportion to the present value of the produce as the old rent bore to the old value of the produce when the said rent was last fixed, or at some subsequent period which may be taken as a starting point; or, in other words, the old rent should bear to the increased rent the same proportion as the former value of the produce of the soil, calculated on an average of three or five years next before the date of the alleged rise in value, bears to its present value. Now, without denying that this perhaps is as good a rule as the courts could arrive at in the indeterminate state of the law, their business being not to amend the law but to carry it out as far as possible, still it must be said that this rule amounts to no rule whatever, or is worse than nothing, because it positively bristles with difficulties from beginning to end. In the first place it is only in the event of there having been at some previous period a definite dispute that there is any starting point. But notoriously it is not the case that there has been in all cases a definite dispute which has been determined: usually there is nothing of the kind. The rent has gone on for a lengthened period; there are no village records which are filed in any public office. The zemindar is the only person who has a record, and that cannot be appealed to as an authoritative document, especially as the ryot will refuse to acknowledge it. So that there is no fixed starting point. If, therefore, a point is attempted to be fixed, then immediately the whole arena of dispute is opened. But supposing a starting point is fixed, and that there was some particular rent fixed at some previous period. Even in that case the whole question is absolutely begged, because the question is whether that particular rent was a right one or not. It is utterly unscientific to say that because the rent was fixed a few years ago it was an absolutely right one. The parties will allege that this is a wrong rent, that it ought to be decided according to proper principles of reason and justice, and that the old rent is faulty. The present existence of a dispute virtually alleges that there is a fault in the existing rent and in the old rate; so that whatever faults there may be in the old rent are to be stereotyped and perpetuated by this rule of proportion, a rule which does not even profess to be guided by any principle, but merely takes what was, or is, as a foundation for what ought to be in future. Then of course there is extreme difficulty in finding out what was the produce and what was the rent at some anterior period. It is not always easy to find these things out at the present day; but it is infinitely more difficult to ascertain what these lands produced, and what was the rent so many years ago—particularly, too, when the character of the cultivation of the land has changed. And it is this change of culture that so often causes disputes about rent: it is perhaps the commonest ground for such disputes. Whereas the land grew common crops once, it bears superior staples now. But when and how the change began; whether it began since the time selected as a starting point, can hardly be ascertained in the absence of any records filed in the Collector's outcherry. It is very well to take into consideration the produce of certain fields as they are now. But to ascertain whether each field grew this or some other crop so many years ago is an

unsatisfactory undertaking in the face of conflicting statements. The Lieutenant-Governor is constrained to say, with the greatest respect to all the eminent authorities who tried to frame this rule, that it is unworkable, and is apt to become a trap for unwary litigants. If, then, this rule cannot work, what is to happen? At present no decisions are given so that the subordinate courts are perfectly puzzled; and when in doubt what to do they decide to do nothing, and the disputes remain. The inevitable consequence of economic changes causes disputes to arise, and they are left unsettled to the great detriment of landlords and tenants.

The condition of indigo cultivation in Tirhoot has continued to demand the careful attention of the local officers and Government. The establishment of this great industry on a firm basis, resting on the contentment of the people, is a matter of great interest and importance. Nevertheless complaints on the part of individuals have sometimes been made, and cases have occasionally occurred which cause anxiety as to the future relations between indigo planters and their ryots, and which show that these relations resolve themselves into questions between landlord and tenant. The Lieutenant-Governor has instructed the officers of Government to avoid doing anything which may unnecessarily provoke a contest between landlord and tenant, between employer and labourer, and between the several parties to a large system of engagements; but at the same time to preserve a firm and vigilant attitude in regard to doing justice between man and man, so that the balance of the administration of the law may be fairly and exactly held between the planters and ryots in the event of disputes arising.

In particular, the Lieutenant-Governor has had occasion to observe that in Behar the exercise by the landlord of the power of distraining the ryot's crops is carried to a degree clearly beyond the letter and spirit of the law, and beyond the actual practice in Bengal. The question has for some time past been causing anxiety. It may be that the procedure of distraint locally adopted in Behar has the prescription of long-established usage; still as it is illegal, its modification is only a question of time, for sooner or later the ryots will realize the legal aspect of the case and will seek redress. The Lieutenant-Governor has accordingly directed district officers to warn landlords, as occasion shall arise, that the law imposes conditions which cannot be disregarded, and that crops cannot be distrained save under the provisions of Act VIII of 1869. In the large estate of Durbhunga, too, it has been ordered that the provisions of the law of distraint are not in any way to be exceeded. Doubtless if a good example can be enforced in this estate, an effect will be produced upon neighbouring estates.

The circumstances of another failure of the winter rice crops over a part of North Behar, and of the probability of scarcity and distress in consequence, rendered a special inquiry necessary, and during the cold weather of the past season Messrs. Geddes and MacDonnell were deputed to Behar to make this inquiry and submit a full report regarding the prospects of the country and condition of the people.

The condition of the people was reported by these officers to be very low, especially since the famine of 1874. Such a circumstance

affords additional proof of the severity of the trial to which the people were subjected by the scarcity of that time. But as has been mentioned on other occasions, their condition even before that time was low. They had moreover arrears of rent to pay, and this circumstance aggravated the case. The people were beginning already to take the remedy into their own hands by migrating across the border into the adjoining Nepalese territory, where they can find virgin soil awaiting the plough, and free of rent for the first year. The Lieutenant-Governor has caused the Commissioner to seriously caution the zemindars in the neighbourhood, and especially the manager of the Durbhunga estate. Upon this great estate at least the pressure has, it is hoped, been effectually relieved. Still it is unfortunately true that although the Durbhunga estate may be better managed than any other in Tirhoot, this estate does not essentially differ from the rest of the province in respect of the inferior condition of the peasantry as compared with the surrounding provinces. Undoubtedly the condition of the peasantry is low in Behar—lower than that of any other peasantry with equal natural advantages in any province which Sir Richard Temple has seen in India. In 1868 the inferior status of the peasantry and tenantry was the subject of much official correspondence. In 1872 and 1873 this matter caused some anxiety to Government. In 1874 the famine supervened: the immediate solicitude of Government was rather to save the lives of the people than to protect their legal rights. In 1875, after the famine storm and crisis, it was thought advisable to let the land have rest from all sorts of agitation. But during the past year a part of the very tracts which previously suffered was again threatened with scarcity, and the question of tenant-right once more forced itself upon the attention of Government.

The situation in Behar is thus one of anxiety. The well being of the population rests on foundations of a precarious character, and it will demand the utmost vigilance and discrimination to deal with the complications with which the whole question is embarrassed. It has been determined by the Government of India and the Secretary of State not to have recourse to immediate and necessarily incomplete remedies, but to leave the subject to the attentive consideration of the Government of Bengal, in order that such ameliorations may be introduced as full experience and further inquiry may dictate.

The condition of landholders in the Bhagulpore Division is also described as unsettled. "Considerable changes," writes the Commissioner, "may be expected. The old houses are heavily involved: many of them have already been sold up, and others are gradually breaking up owing to mortgages being foreclosed or sales being concluded; and new blood, chiefly of the mahajun class, is being infused into the zemindars. I have no doubt that as time goes on we shall see, except perhaps in the largest estates, a new set of zemindars comparatively free from indebtedness, and bestowing more personal attention upon the management of their estates than the old ones could do." These changes, actual or prospective, in the proprietary tenure of the land, cause much regret to the Lieutenant-Governor. The relationship between landlord and tenant is upon the whole quiet, though occasionally

facts come to notice which show that events happen which provoke discontent and require careful watching. The farming system is extensively in vogue in the Bhagulpore district as in Behar, and illegal attachment and seizures of crops are common. It is the practice, when the crops are ripe, to send a peon or sowar to lay an embargo thereupon until the claims of the landlords are met. This practice was brought prominently to notice during the course of the inquiries regarding scarcity in Soopool. The evil has dated for years back and has become a custom, so that the villagers submit without complaint. But the practice is manifestly illegal, and zemindars and others have been warned that the law of distraint imposes conditions that cannot be disregarded. The Lieutenant-Governor expects that this practice will be gradually stopped.

The principal causes of uneasiness among the people in the Sonthal Pergunnahs were referred to in last year's report. These are (1) the rent question and (2) religious movements. Progress has been made towards

Affairs in the Sonthal Pergunnahs.

setting the former at rest by the settlement operations, and the irritation, or rather the ill feeling that the Sonthals bore against their landlords, is now more or less in abeyance. The settlement operations have been constantly and closely watched by Government, and the subject has been separately reviewed in this report in the chapter on land settlement. As regards the religious movement, the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to be able to say that there has been no widespread excitement during the last year. This result is to be attributed to the precautionary measures which were taken in 1875. A detachment of the regiment stationed at Bhagulpore is still stationed at Nya Doomka, the head-quarters of the Sonthal Pergunnahs district.

The Government of India were pleased to ask during the year for the views of the Lieutenant-Governor on the questions raised in certain extracts from the report submitted by the Committee appointed to consider the alleged grievances of the North-Western Provinces civilians, so far as those questions affect the Lower Provinces. The extracts are those paragraphs (46—50, and 56) in which the Committee consider the state of promotion in Bengal, and make suggestions bearing chiefly on the distribution of appointments in the Non-Regulation Districts of that province. The general conclusion arrived at by the Committee, with reference to the position of the service in Bengal, is contained in the following sentences of the report:—

Promotion and prospects of the Civil Service.

"In the years 1861, 1862, and 1863 a very large recruitment was made, but the excess did little more than make up for the defects of earlier years and the draught made on the service in 1858 for Upper India; and the lowest man of 1863 is almost as near the head of the list as he would have been had the service been all along regularly recruited. All reasonable expectations, based on the average of promotion in past years, have practically been fulfilled, though there are years of exceptionally rapid promotion with which the present time may compare unfavourably.

"The Committee are not therefore of opinion that the service of the Lower Provinces has a right to expect that any exceptional measures should be taken by the Government of India for its relief, though they admit that the civil servants of 1863, 1864, and 1865, are somewhat further back in the scale of promotion than those of any other years."

On this subject the Lieutenant-Governor's opinion, formed very deliberately after consulting some of the best informed officers in the Lower Provinces, was stated in his minute on the Bengal Administration Report for 1874-75. It may be well to restate it here by the following extracts from that Minute, as it remains unaltered; subsequent inquiries have rather strengthened it:—

"But as regards prospects and promotion, the condition of the service is not altogether satisfactory. Though complaints have not been made here in the same manner as in the North-Western Provinces, yet there is a partial depression, brought about by the same causes as those which have been operative elsewhere. The senior ranks generally, and the extreme junior ranks, are favourably situated; but the intermediate ranks, of a standing in length of service between seven and fourteen years, are not so fortunate, their average salaries being somewhat below their just expectations. Appreciating the serious considerations which arise whenever the position of any section of a service recruited by competition becomes depressed, the Government of Bengal has in many instances appointed civil servants to places beyond the Regulation Districts, wherein the service is ordinarily employed."

"The cause of the difficulty is mainly this, that in the years 1861 and 1862 too many young civil servants were sent out from England to these provinces. Their presence is welcomed for a time, inasmuch as in a busy country like this their services are valuable; but as they rise in the service, it becomes apparent that they stand in each other's way, and that promotion is being clogged. The practical lesson to be learnt is this, that if the service is to be maintained in that prosperity and contentment which are essential to its efficiency, and essential, therefore, to the success of the administration, the proportion of young officers to be sent out from England year by year must be most carefully arranged, so that the proportion of junior to senior officers may not be exceeded. Constituted as the service is, its welfare depends on its numbers being limited and kept comparatively small in relation to the number of well-paid appointments. Financial considerations impose a strict limitation on the number of such appointments. As, therefore, the number of appointments cannot be increased, there is nothing for it but to regulate the number of men with a view to its never growing too large; and this can be done only by limiting that number at the beginning. There are few things more vitally important to the well-being of the administration than the observance of this principle. I have submitted to the Government of India careful statements of the number of recruits required annually in future for the Covenanted Civil Service in these provinces."

On the same subject Sir Richard Temple recorded the following further remarks in a minute dated 1st April last:—

"It would be a matter for the utmost regret if any proposal that a number of civilians from the North-Western Provinces of any year or years should be transferred to Bengal were to be accepted by the Government of India. The men so transferred would claim to serve in the Behar districts, as they would not know Bengali, and this would bear hard upon men who have suffered from the climate of the delta. The fact that Bengal is much less favourably situated as regards climate than the North-Western Provinces must not be overlooked in estimating the position of the men in these provinces. Retirements and deaths are considerably more numerous in Bengal, there having been 181 such casualties there between 1859 and 1874, as against 144 in the North-Western Provinces. If men thus wear out sooner in Bengal, they are certainly entitled to a little extra consideration while they are

actually at work My predecessor, in his letter No. 159C.S., dated 23rd May 1873, has dwelt very strongly on the relative disadvantages of service in Lower Bengal, and I would earnestly assure the Government of India that the point is not one that can equitably be overlooked.

"The prospects of the Civil Service have for some time past been the cause of increasing anxiety; and though it might be admitted that the position of the Bengal section of the service is, on the whole, not so unfavourable as that of the North-Western Provinces men, there would appear to be nevertheless valid grounds for alarm in the Lower Provinces. And by way of example, I may mention that the Bengal civilians hope that officers needed by the Government of India for Assam may be chosen from among their body. The recruitment of civilians for Assam is provided for in the Bengal indent, and the civilians of Bengal have been induced to regard that province as one of the few outside fields open to them. When recently a North-West civilian was appointed to an important post in Assam, there must have been special reasons. I only venture to ask consideration to the general principle.

"It has been suggested by the Committee that the appointment of persons other than members of the Civil Service to the Non-Regulation Districts should be absolutely prohibited. This does not commend itself to my judgment; indeed I most strongly deprecate it. Though conceived in the supposed interests of the service, it really militates against them. It would, in my opinion, tend to over-recruitment, and would in time cause another block. The appointments in the Non-Regulation Districts are not so well paid as those in the Regulation Districts; the work on the whole is not so manifold and laborious, and there is no necessity to raise the pay to the higher scale. The main point is that the proportion of highly paid appointments to low paid appointments in the Non-Regulation Districts is somewhat smaller as compared to the Regulation Districts. In the former there are twelve appointments of Rs. 1,000 and upwards, as compared with six below that salary, excluding assistants on Rs. 500 per mensem. In the latter, putting aside the numerous prizes of Judgeships of the High Court, Memberships of the Board of Revenue, there are 73 line appointments above Rs. 1,000 per mensem as compared with 33 carrying a lower salary, excluding assistants on Rs. 500 per mensem. The effect of recruiting, therefore, to supply these Non-Regulation Districts with civilians alone would be to diminish the average emoluments of the service, and to spread the service over a comparatively unremunerative field. In that case the interests of the service might be injuriously affected. At all events, however, the service would not benefit, inasmuch as there would be a proportional increase of recruiting. Nor can the proposal be supported on public grounds. Some of the outlying portions of Chota Nagpore (which I have recently visited) are so sparsely populated, so backward in civilization, and pay so little Government revenue, that they do not require, and could not by themselves properly afford, an expensive establishment of civilians. It is possible, in these districts, to retain the services of military officers for a long time, which suits the people; whereas civilians would be constantly changeable and changed. As

regards the interests of the Civil Service, the real value of these Non-Regulation Provinces is to provide an outlet for civilians at times of pressure, or stress of promotion, so far as this can be managed without injury to the just claims of officers other than civil servants, and in the manner which has actually been adopted in several cases of late. This can best be managed by recruiting the service sufficiently for the Regulation Districts only, and then allowing the Non-Regulation Districts to be officered partly from the Civil Service and partly from the outside, and then occasionally appointing civil servants to these districts whenever there may be special need.

"It has been suggested that a guaranteed minimum salary should be allowed to officers who, by no fault of their own, but as a result of the over-recruitment of certain years, have been, or may hereafter be, disappointed of their reasonable expectations. The proposal seems fair; and if the guarantee is fixed liberally, *i.e.* by reference to some acceptable standard of the salary drawn by men over a long standard of years, it would probably meet the case adequately. I have long thought that some safety-valve of this sort is necessary in order to satisfy the just claims of a service recruited, as this service now is, by open competition in England. In order to obtain a constant supply of good men (in itself an object of the highest public consequence), is seems to me to be essential to set forth in England a moderate, though safe, standard of promotion, and then to ensure the realization in India of that expectation.

"Then, again, there would be instances in which men would be very willing to accept pensions on a graduated scale according to length of service: men of good lives who could hope to stay their full time, but for private reasons would be willing to retire, though they are not compelled to do so on medical certificate. It may be answered to this that it is against the public interest to lose men of some standing when they have begun to be useful; but it is easy to rejoin that there is no lack of good men to supply their places, and that a healthy flow of promotion is beneficial to the public service: it is really false economy to retain discontented men.

"It does not appear that if matters remain as they are the men of the overcrowded years, and those immediately below them, are likely to have such rapid promotion in the future as will compensate them for the misfortunes of the past. It may be taken as certain that the number of men above twenty years' service is far below the proper average. These men, and those immediately following them, will in time enjoy rapid promotion. But once the men of the overcrowded years begin to fill in vacancies in the upper ranks, promotion will again stagnate. There will be more officers of those years to pass through the appointments, and being younger in age and eager to make up the pecuniary deficit in their past savings they will remain longer in the appointments, and so place a more lasting barrier in the way of their juniors and successors."

It remains only to be added that the Lieutenant-Governor has strongly recommended in a separate letter that measures similar to those which have been sanctioned by the Secretary of State for the North-Western Provinces with a view to the reduction of the surplus

number of civilians, and for remedying the position of those who have suffered by the present block in promotion, should be extended also to Bengal.

In last year's Administration Report it was explained that in view of the large number of passed candidates who had yet to be provided with appointments, the Lieutenant-Governor had decided not to hold another examination for the Subordinate Executive Civil Service under the then existing rules till further notice. Subsequently, after reviewing the principle on which the examinations had previously been conducted, the Lieutenant-Governor pointed out that it had resulted in the passing of a larger number of candidates than the Government could conveniently provide with appointments, and directed that, instead of all candidates being passed who came up to a given standard, the examinations in future should be competitive, that is, that a fixed number of places in the higher and in the lower classes of appointments would be prescribed, for which those candidates would be passed who came out first at the examination. It was further laid down that no candidate would be passed for the higher grade of appointments unless he obtained at least two-thirds, or for the lower grade of appointments unless he obtained at least half, of the total number of obtainable marks upon the whole examination.

The number of appointments offered for competition at the past examination, which is the first held under the new rules, was four in the higher and seven in the lower grade; that is, four appointments on Rs. 100 per mensem or upwards, and seven on salaries below that amount. The examination was held in March last at Hooghly, Patna, and Cuttaek. Ten candidates entered as competitors, but only 8 appeared and underwent examination. Of these, 3 entered for the higher grade and 5 for the lower; but none passed for the former, and only 5 candidates passed for the latter grade.

As the Superintendent reports that the paucity in the number of candidates who entered for the competitive examination is probably owing to the fact that the new examination rules were not made public sufficiently early in the year to afford candidates much time for preparation, and that the terms were not generally nor properly understood, the Commissioners of divisions and district officers have been requested to take every opportunity of explaining the principle on which these examinations are conducted, and to notify as widely as possible that another examination will be held in February or March next. The precise date on which the examination will be held next year has since been notified, as well as the number of appointments to be competed for in each grade.

The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to be able to say that the favourable opinion which was expressed last year of the usefulness of the subordinate establishments calls for no modification. With scarcely an exception the divisional and district officers consider the service of these establishments to be of great value, and to supply a want which has long been felt in the Lower Provinces. One Magistrate, a highly competent authority, reports that "the appointment of sub-deputies has been of

Efficiency of the subordinate executive establishments.

great benefit to the country generally, and to officers in charge of sub-divisions particularly." He adds that "there never was a better method of getting fairly good work done economically." In the same way, another experienced Magistrate expresses his opinion: "I have found these men as a rule very useful, and with their assistance in special work I have been able to get on without any special establishment. They have been constantly on the move, and have given every satisfaction." A similar testimony is borne on all sides. It need only be added that some alterations in the system of appointing and promoting sub-deputies and canoongoes have been suggested; but as new rules on the subject have recently been issued, the Lieutenant-Governor does not consider that any changes are required at present.

Generally speaking, the local committees in Bengal are reported to have worked well, and the members of the Working of local committees. committees are said to evince an intelligent interest in the proceedings under discussion. The Lieutenant-Governor has laid down the rule that, so far as the functions of a Central District Committee relate to matters of contest and principle, they are rightly exercised by the Magistrate of the district, who is *ex-officio* Chairman of the Committee (guided of course by the District Engineer or Inspector of Schools, as the case may be); and it is evident that the advice and assistance of the unofficial members of the Central Committee will be as efficacious in dealing with the details of administration in the neighbourhood of the head-quarters of the district, whether for schools or roads, as that of the branch committees is found to be in the sub-divisions of the district. In regard to the construction and repair of village roads, embankments, and water-courses; to the expediency or otherwise of a new road, or repairs of existing roads; to the supervision of distant patshalas and of local training schools, or in determining the necessity of a particular grant-in-aid,—all matters which require local knowledge and leisure, such as too often cannot be afforded by the Magistrate, it has always been found that the local committees, if their services are rightly utilized, have furnished a valuable agency.

The proposals for an industrial survey of India originated by Dr. Forbes Watson have received careful consideration from the Government of Bengal in connection with the acquisition of agricultural and trade statistics and the organization of a special Statistical Department under the Bengal Government.

The importance and desirability of Dr. Forbes Watson's scheme are fully appreciated by the Lieutenant-Governor, but at the same time it is feared that the difficulties in the way of giving it effect must necessarily be great. The scheme contemplates a complete survey of the production, distribution, and consumption of Indian wealth, with a full description and classification of collected specimens of every product and of machines and implements used. The basis of the plan is the enlistment of private aid in behalf of the diffusion of a knowledge of the agricultural and industrial capabilities of every district. It is proposed to organize in each district an honorary committee, in direct communication with Dr. Forbes Watson, which will furnish all the

required information, and will transmit the specimens that may be collected to a museum in London. The committees are to be ultimately allowed to erect at their own expense local museums in which to deposit duplicates of the specimens which they have themselves collected, with specimens of the products of other districts, and models of European machines, &c. The final result of the whole of Dr. Watson's scheme will be the preparation and publication of a Dictionary of Commerce for India, prepared in England and based upon, and for illustration referring to, an arranged museum of products which is to be established in London.

Although Dr. Forbes Watson looks to voluntary efforts for the practical working out of his scheme, he does not lose sight of the necessity of cordial co-operation from the various branches of the administration. He recognizes how essential it is that the local authorities should support the different committees with their active countenance. He also points out that some of the information he requires can be best afforded by the Customs Department. And in addition to this he refers to the mass of facts which have been, or will be, submitted to Government in the various departmental reports or in the course of special statistical inquiries. He desires to have these data supplied to him in a more detailed shape than that in which they are at present published.

Dr. Forbes Watson's first proposal is to ascertain what are the industrial products of each district, and to obtain samples of each substance. The Lieutenant-Governor considers that in this respect a great deal can be done, and in fact already has been done, in Bengal. There is an Economic Museum in Calcutta, which was established by Sir George Campbell in the spring of 1874, and which has since been encouraged and developed by Sir Richard Temple. The scope and objects of this museum are identical with those of Dr. Watson's proposed museum in England. The committee of management are charged with the collection, identification, and classification of the economic products of Bengal, both raw materials and manufactures, and with the work of ascertaining all that is already known regarding such products, and digesting and reducing the information into practicable form for circulation among local officers and others. The machinery by which it is attempted to attain these objects consists of a central committee in Calcutta and a network of local committees throughout Bengal, one being in every district, and a few of the more important sub-divisions having also separate committees. The district officer is always *ex-officio* chairman of the local committee, and with him rests, in the first instance, the nomination of the other members, it being an instruction to him to select such gentlemen as feel an interest in, and possess some knowledge of, the matters which it is the object of the museum to deal with, and especially, where possible, to enlist the service of native gentlemen who may possess these qualifications. It has taken time to organize this network of committees, but the arrangements are now almost complete, there being 53 committees at work, of which 41 are for districts and 12 for sub-divisions.

It seems to the Lieutenant-Governor that the Calcutta Economic Museum may thus be said to have already attained a considerable

measure of success. The Government has identified itself with the museum as far as possible. All district officers and their subordinates are instructed to render every aid to the local committees formed in connection with the museum at Calcutta. But beyond this Government can directly do little. It cannot be expected that in every Collector we shall find at once the necessary scientific knowledge and commercial information required for the compilation of an exhaustive and accurate list of the products of his district. The organization above described is more likely than any other to obtain the information required; while the central committee at Calcutta, itself a mixed body and able to obtain the opinion of experts on any difficult questions, is best able to sift, test, and collate the district lists submitted, to compare samples, to identify substances known by different names, to distinguish different substances known by the same name, and to classify products under suitable general heads.

The Lieutenant-Governor apprehends that, as far as regards the collection of samples of the industrial products of each district, and as regards the classification and identification of such products, the Calcutta Central Committee will be enabled to achieve satisfactory results in communication with the district committees, and that they will be able to conduct also the necessary correspondence with Dr. Forbes Watson, and the transmission of specimens for the Indian Museum in London. To do this they will need only a very slight addition to the present sanctioned scale of expenditure. The Government of Bengal will cordially co-operate with them to this extent, and instructions to this effect will be given to the committee of the museum. It is, however, in the Lieutenant-Governor's opinion, of more than doubtful expediency whether the functions of the museum should be allowed to extend beyond this point; and it is certain that they cannot be extended further without a large increase of expenditure and the creation of a new organization, which does not appear at present to be called for.

Under any circumstances, it seems that the proposal of placing the district local committees in direct correspondence with Dr. Watson should be abandoned. Looking to the influence which alone will induce the members to devote their time and energy to the task, to the small amount of scientific knowledge that most of them possess, and to the necessity that exists for the intelligent selection and uniform system of classification, it appears necessary that the local committees should be directly subordinated to a committee of management, not situated at a distance in another country, but at the head-quarters of their own province, and known to enjoy the support of the local Government.

Dr. Forbes Watson's first object can, the Lieutenant-Governor considers, be fairly met by the co-operation of the Calcutta Economic Museum Committee and of the local committees. A classified list of industrial products and samples of each substance can be collected and sent home to England by means of the present organization. The further objects proposed appear, however, to travel beyond the province of these committees.

The second feature of Dr. Watson's plan for an industrial survey is to obtain in detail (1) statistics of the area of

Agricultural statistics.

production of each staple of commerce, (2) of the

quantity produced, and (3) accurate accounts of the method of production; in other words, it is the acquisition and collation of agricultural statistics. The Lieutenant-Governor is most anxious to do what can be done to improve the resources of Bengal in this respect. The statistics relating to the area of cultivation under the different crops and to the quantities of produce are still defective in these provinces. We are still very deficient in our knowledge of agricultural statistics, although of recent years some knowledge on the subject has been acquired from special inquiries and reports, and under the orders of Government a collection is gradually being made of data from which really trustworthy deductions may be made. In particular recent investigations have thrown much light on matters regarding the food-supply of these provinces.

The defective character of the agricultural statistics in Behar and Northern Bengal has, however, been prominently brought to notice in connection with Mr. MacDonnell's elaborate and valuable report on the agricultural condition and food-supply of those provinces. To a reader of Mr. MacDonnell's report this deficiency might at first sight appear extraordinary. Are these provinces, it may be asked, really so much behind other provinces of British India in respect of agricultural statistics? and if they are, then why should this be the case? Cannot the local authorities manage to obtain such statistics?

But it must be borne in mind that the revenue survey in these provinces exhibits only the exterior boundaries of villages, and does not display any interior details of cultivation and waste, or of lands culturable and unculturable, as has been done in other parts of India. The question of displaying these interior details in the revenue survey was considered at the time, but the project was abandoned, partly, it is understood by reason of doubt as to the right of the State to insist on a survey of so detailed a character in estates under a permanent settlement. As might be anticipated under these circumstances, there is no field map, no cadastral survey; and indeed in permanently-settled estates there might be doubt as to the lawfulness of State interference to such a degree as would be involved by a survey field by field.

Again, in other parts of India the necessity of revising the settlements of land revenue from time to time has caused elaborate surveys to be made. No such opportunity can arise in permanently settled provinces. Thus it happens that these provinces are still wanting in those surveys without which agricultural statistics cannot possibly be obtained. The absence of such materials, then, need not excite any surprise. The local authorities are not at all to blame if they fail to produce figures relating to the whole country, for they have not the means of obtaining such statistics. They will continue to supply the best information they can; but it must be at the best very imperfect, and will never stand any strict statistical test. For small selected areas they may indeed obtain good statistics, from which generalization may be had regarding the whole country; still all this is very different from statistics relating to the entire area. Unless, therefore, the Government can decide to undertake such surveys field by field, the want of agricultural statistics must continue to be felt. Whether such a measure

could be undertaken is a difficult question; and there are manifest difficulties in the way, which may be classed as legal, administrative, and financial. The possible legal difficulty is not considerable. For irrigation purposes a cadastral survey was recently undertaken in Shahabad (South Behar), and the Government right to do so was unquestioned; but if any legal question arose, it could be disposed of by legislation. By administrative difficulty is meant the possibility of the landlords under the permanent settlement objecting to the field survey, or feeling discontent thereat. Here, again, however there would be no trouble, in Behar at least. The landlords in Shahabad make no objection whatever to the cadastral survey; neither would they make any in the rest of Behar, so long as they were not required to defray the cost. There remains the financial difficulty; and that is very serious. It may be well to ask the Government (as in other parts of India) to bear a heavy charge where the land revenue is concerned, or even in parts where canals are being made, as in South Behar. But without any such inducement it is hard to expect Government to embark on so costly an enterprise even for the sake of agricultural statistics.

Looking then to these considerations, the Lieutenant-Governor can scarcely foresee the time when a cadastral survey of Behar and North Bengal will be made, or when the Government shall have complete agricultural statistics worthy of the name. However keen our regret may be at this prospect, or rather want of prospect, it is better to look the trouble in the face. For the Shahabad district, indeed, there will be a field survey second to none in India as regards accuracy and minuteness. If irrigation shall be extended in North Behar, there will doubtless be a cadastral survey in those particular localities. In parts of the great estate of Durbhunga (under management of the Court of Wards) there will be a field survey; but when all these parts are taken together they form but a small proportion of the whole of Behar and North Bengal.

The importance and urgency of collecting agricultural statistics being, however, admitted, it seems desirable that measures should be undertaken from time to time, as far as means may permit, to remedy our deficiencies; and it appears to Sir Richard Temple that the best plan would be to extend the tentative system introduced by the late Lieutenant-Governor, and to appoint in certain selected areas small special establishments to obtain accurate statistics.

Sir George Campbell paid much attention to these matters, and to the correct preparation of the statistical returns of physical, political, and fiscal geography in the districts of the Bengal province. He found that the information regarding agricultural statistics at the disposal of Government was vague and untrustworthy, and he resolved on an attempt to obtain, if possible, really valuable statistics. In order to attain this object he organized arrangements (1) by means of special establishments sanctioned in selected districts; (2) by the appointment of executive officers in every district, now known as the sub-divisional establishments; (3) by utilising to the full the existing local establishments in certain parts of the country; and (4) by instituting exact inquiries in Wards' and Government estates.

Collection of statistics
from selected areas

All of these arrangements have in some measure borne fruit, but the first of them has at present yielded the most valuable and practical results. With the approval of the Government of India four special statistical parties, each consisting of a Deputy Collector and a suitable establishment, were sanctioned for agricultural inquiries towards the close of the year 1872. The Deputy Collectors were directed not to spread their inquiries into too large areas, but to select a thana, or a couple of thanas, or a sub-division, and complete that first, thoroughly ascertaining the cultivated area; statistics of irrigation; quantity of land under each description of crops; average produce; stock in cattle; rents, wages, prices, manufacture, and trade. They were also instructed to write an account of the mode and character of the different kinds of agriculture employed; of the average size of farms; mode of manuring; circumstances of the cultivators; terms of borrowing capital, and the like. The Deputy Collectors have all made laborious and careful inquiries, and have submitted their reports to Government. The reports for the most part are very interesting, and they have been published as Government selections.

The area, however, to which these inquiries extend was necessarily limited, and the results, although they are believed to be generally accurate within this limited sphere, yet deal with the physical features of Bengal on a comparatively small scale. We now know something of specimen areas of the country; but as those areas are few and circumscribed, it is desirable to prosecute our inquiries further and embrace other areas than those which have already been completed. It was the opinion of the Special Committee on Statistics in the India Office "that the plan in operation in Bengal should be continued of having a small staff specially appointed to collect the information in selected areas." The Lieutenant-Governor believes that this plan will be the most practicable and satisfactory, as it will certainly be the cheapest way of supplementing our knowledge of agricultural statistics. At the same time the Lieutenant-Governor can guarantee that no opportunity will be lost of obtaining information in other ways and by other means. There is indeed in Bengal a considerable accumulation of scattered reports and papers bearing on agricultural questions, which for some time past have been, and are still being, arranged as well as circumstances and want of leisure will permit.

The sanction of the Government of India was accordingly asked for the disbursement of the small cost necessary for prosecuting these inquiries in selected areas in certain districts, especially in Behar, where the urgency of accurate agricultural statistics is greater. If this expenditure could have been sanctioned, then a certain further progress would have been made; but unfortunately financial exigencies rendered it impossible to sanction a grant for this purpose during the present year. In the Beerbhoom district alone the special Deputy Collector, Baboo Janokee Nath Majoomdar, was permitted to remain on special duty during the whole of the year 1876-77, on the understanding that the work of collecting statistics for the whole district should be completed within the year. Of this district the work already done has been reported to Government by the Collectors, Messrs. Geoghegan and Hime, and so much had been already done that it was felt very

desirable to finish the inquiry and make it complete for the whole district. When Beerbhoom is completed it will be the first Bengal district from the whole of which trustworthy statistics have been collected.

The third object of inquiry in Dr. Forbes Watson's list relates to manufacture and the statistics of manufacture. Under this heading a great deal of information is already available in Bengal. Much valuable information is to be found scattered throughout many works by official and non-official gentlemen, which only requires to be brought together and carefully collated and tested by comparison. From Dr. Hamilton Buchanan downwards there is a whole series of papers, containing accounts more or less full and accurate of native manufactures of various sorts. It remains only to collate this information. In this connection the Lieutenant-Governor's attention is drawn to an observation of Dr. Forbes Watson, where he notes, as a principal defect in the present system of collecting commercial statistics, "the want of critical condensation of the materials, which have involved numberless discrepancies." Sir Richard Temple quite agrees with this observation, and would urge that a "critical condensation" of the existing reports, memoranda, papers of societies, and other documents of the kind, should go hand in hand with new inquiries. Several attempts at such a collation have already been made with reference to tobacco, jute, flax, silk, and lac and other commodities, and an attempt is being made to extend the same treatment to other products. But for this purpose more leisure is required than is ordinarily available to the Secretaries of Government; and the work can only be properly carried out by a special officer at the head of a permanent department devoted to the acquisition of statistics relating to commerce and agriculture.

The fourth object of Dr. Watson's inquiry is to obtain more exact statistics of internal and external trade. As far as external trade is concerned, the Lieutenant-Governor would submit that very complete statistics are furnished by the authorities of the Customs Department, and that these statistics are carefully analysed and reviewed by Government. The arrangements are perhaps open to improvement in detail, but practically the registration of the sea-borne trade of Bengal is now satisfactorily effected. The great importance of the registration of internal traffic within the Bengal province has also of late years been fully recognized, and considerable progress was made under the orders of the late Lieutenant-Governor, Sir George Campbell, for registering and recording the traffic. Sir Richard Temple has recently sanctioned arrangements for the further extension and systematisation of this registration, in order that, if possible, a complete system of the registration of river-borne traffic in Bengal may be established. A system of registration along the most important road routes of the province has also been started. These arrangements have now been in operation for more than a twelve month, and have proved successful. In communication, moreover, with the neighbouring local Governments, arrangements have been made for registering the traffic crossing our frontiers by land or by water, and the trade across the northern frontier of Bengal which touches on Nepal,

Sikkim, and Bhootan is also registered. The chapters on trade in the administration reports of the past and present year will be found to furnish full information regarding the external and internal trade of these provinces.

The price-currents already submitted to Government and published in the official Gazette furnish the nearest approach to trustworthy information under Dr. Forbes Watson's fifth object of inquiry. The tables published relate to prices current at the head-quarters stations of districts only. To obtain lists of prices for every article at every bazar in the country will, the Lieutenant-Governor thinks, hardly be possible without an expenditure out of all proportion to the value of the information likely to be gathered. At the same time it is the case that comprehensive tables of prices current, not for the head-quarters stations only, but for sub-divisions also, and even for all thanas, are, and have been for years past, collected in all districts, and are available if Government should at any time require to make a reference to them. In Mr. MacDonnell's recent report on the food-supply of Behar and North Bengal are published elaborate statements showing the prices current at all the sub-divisions of Bengal for several years, and these statements will be most valuable for purposes of comparison and reference. For ordinary purposes, however, it is found that the price-lists published fortnightly in the Gazette are sufficient. On emergencies more detailed statements are always called for, and are then immediately submitted to Government; but it is feared that if more elaborate statements were habitually submitted and published, they would be found to defeat their own object, and that excessive detail would endanger the practical utility the returns now possess.

The concluding observations of Dr. Forbes Watson relate to the materials available for the determination of the consumption per head of various articles. It may truly be said that there is no point on which it is more difficult to arrive at the truth than this. Mr. MacDonnell's report, referred to in my last paragraph, contains the most valuable information that has recently been collected in Bengal upon the subject. In all probability, however, it is the method of comparison and collation that is most likely to lead to trustworthy results; and at all events this method is necessary to show with what caution the estimates of individuals are to be taken.

It will have been inferred from the above general observations made in this letter that the Lieutenant-Governor does not consider Dr. Forbes Watson's scheme of an industrial survey to be practicable in these provinces. The Lieutenant-Governor indeed goes further, and while fully appreciating the objects of the scheme, and the careful manner in which the details of the scheme have been worked out by its author, he believes that most of Dr. Watson's proposals are not exactly suited to the circumstances of the country, and he cannot but consider that the desired results can be more successfully and satisfactorily achieved by proper arrangements designed and perfected in Bengal itself than by an organization, however ably superintended, which

Establishment of a special Statistical Department and publication of the *Statistical Reporter*.

has its head and centre in England. The Lieutenant-Governor apprehends that the industrial exploitation of India should be undertaken by the several provincial Governments and Administrations, subject of course to the control of the Government of India and the Secretary of State, but that the management of the scheme should rest in its details with the local Governments, under each of whom a special Department of Statistics, Agriculture, and Commerce should be established. The Government of India already possesses such a department for the purposes of general superintendence, and such departments have, it is understood, been since organized under one or two of the local Governments. In Bengal the Lieutenant-Governor has established a department of this character, and the initiatory arrangements having been made to work, it is hoped that in time the department will be placed on a footing of permanent efficiency. A vigorous commencement has, however, been made, and the collection of statistical information is everywhere encouraged. It may be truly said that there are few economic or administrative matters in Bengal on which a mass of facts and figures is not available. A special branch of the office at the head-quarters of the local Government is now employed in collating and elaborating this information, and in connection with this department the monthly publication has been arranged of an official journal, the *Statistical Reporter*, which contains a quantity of information on statistical and economic subjects. This journal already supplies, as far as Bengal is concerned, the place of Dr. Forbes Watson's proposed journal of the industrial survey. The publication of the *Statistical Reporter* supplies the means of recording and widely circulating available information which would otherwise speedily become unavailable and lost. The progress that is now being made in industrial and statistical inquiries in Bengal, and the value of the economic memoirs and statements that are now published in the *Statistical Reporter*, are facts full of promise, with a direct bearing on the condition of the people and on the solution of the most difficult problems of administration.

The Lieutenant-Governor apprehends that the acquisition of agricultural statistics, the statistics of manufacture, the registration of trade and of the local prices current, the statistics of consumption, which are the principal features of Dr. Forbes Watson's project, are all administrative matters within the especial province of Government, and beyond the pale of such an inquiry as an industrial survey resting upon any basis less sure than that of Government. Matters so complex and so difficult can only be kept together by the local influence of an organization as potent and continually present as that of Government. The Lieutenant-Governor, therefore, cannot support Dr. Forbes Watson's scheme in its details. In its general principles that scheme is valuable, as affording systematic and methodical suggestions for guidance, and as calling attention to requirements of which, in Bengal at least, the need is pressing: in its details it does not appear to be practicable. At the same time the advantage of the supervision of the Secretary of State, and of such eminent authorities as Dr. Forbes Watson in the India Office, is evident, and the Lieutenant-Governor will be glad to cause full records of the proceedings of Government, all

detailed information received wherever possible, and all special reports bearing upon economic and industrial questions, to be transmitted regularly to the India Office, and to be favoured in reply with Dr. Watson's advice and encouragement as occasion calls for. As regards the India Museum, the Lieutenant-Governor has already expressed his willingness to co-operate with that institution by means of the Calcutta Museum to the fullest extent.

There were no considerable changes of jurisdiction during the year.

Jurisdictions.

The Chandpore sub-division, in the south-west corner of the Tipperah district, was sanctioned.

The total number of sub-divisions now sanctioned in Bengal is 97. The only other change that need be mentioned is that the district of Maldah was transferred from the Rajshahye and Cooch Behar Division to the Bhagulpore Division with effect from the 1st November 1876. The civil jurisdiction of Maldah remains, as before, under the district of Dinagepore. Towards the close of the year, moreover, there has been some discussion with reference to a proposal to establish new districts in Bengal with a view to increased administrative efficiency, and this matter is still under consideration.

Under Regulation VIII of 1800, 6,403 applications for the registration of mutation of names were decided during the year. It is universally admitted that the number of applications bears a very small proportion to the transfers actually made. The recent enactment on the subject—Act VII (B.C.) of 1876—will entirely change the present system, both by prescribing suitable penalties for neglect to register, and by requiring the extent of each proprietor's interest to be separately entered; so that the register (it is hoped) will supply a record of landed property and its owners in Bengal far more complete than has hitherto been attempted to be made. The Lieutenant-Governor has fixed the 1st November 1876 as the date on or before which applications for registry must be made, and steps have been taken for the issue of the necessary notices, and for the distribution of forms of application.

Of 4,309 estates and shares in estates which became liable to sale for arrears of revenue, 591 estates and 53 shares, or rather more than one-seventh of the whole number, were actually sold at prices which average about nine times the Government demand. In eight cases the sales were annulled on appeal, and in four more cases the sale was cancelled by Government on the recommendation of the Board. The large proportion of exemptions is sufficient evidence of the leniency with which the law has been enforced; and in fact it appears to be an unusual thing for an estate to be sold except by the wish of its proprietors, or at least of some one of them. The number of separate accounts opened under Act XI of 1859 was 906, of which 819 were under section 10, and 87 under section 11 of the Act. It is suggested by one Collector that the large fee levied upon these transactions tends to discourage applications; but the true explanation is, no doubt, that given by the Collector of Backergunge, that the paucity of cases is due to the condition that the applicant for opening a separate account must be a recorded sharer, and that at present the great majority of proprietors are not recorded in

Sales of estates.

the Collector's books. It may be confidently expected that one effect of the new Registration Act will be a large increase in the number of applications for the opening of separate accounts.

The partition cases disposed of during the year were 366, of which nearly five-sixths belonged to the Patna and Bhagulpore Divisions. The arrears of these cases are heavy, as no less than 1,373 partitions, many of them of several years' standing, remained for disposal in these two Divisions. In the Dacca Division 22 cases were disposed of and 86 remained pending, and some of these are stated to have been instituted upwards of half a century ago. The urgent necessity for an improved procedure in partition suits has long been manifest; and now that the Bill on the subject has passed the Bengal Legislative Council and become law, it is hoped that future progress will be much facilitated and many difficulties removed.

The area of lands taken up for public purposes during the year amounted to 3,286 acres, which were acquired at a cost of Rs. 10,14,509. The value of land in Calcutta is strikingly illustrated by the fact that the plots acquired for the Calcutta Port Trust, amounting to less than 12 acres, cost very nearly 5 lakhs of rupees. Nearly a lakh of rupees was expended for lands required for irrigation projects. Some defects in the working of the law have been noticed, and will be duly considered in the event of a revision of the Act being undertaken. Amended rules for the instruction of district officers in the conduct of operations under the Act have been prepared by the Board of Revenue.

Notices of enhancement showed a marked decrease as compared with the figures of 1874-75, while the number of relinquishment notices varied very little from the preceding year's returns. The relations between landlords and tenants are still reported to be unsatisfactory, especially in the eastern districts; and if no actual outbreak occurred during the year, this appears to be due to the fact that both the parties to the dispute are in expectation of an early settlement of the points in issue by the action of the legislature. An application which has lately been made for the introduction of the Agrarian Disputes' Act into an estate in Noakholly is now under the Lieutenant-Governor's consideration. The difficulty felt in collecting rents in Noakholly is noticed by the Commissioner of Chittagong; but his proposal, that certain portions of an estate under the Court of Wards should be leased out in talook at fixed rates, because of the recusancy of the tenantry, seems open to objection. The creation of permanent under-tenures in a ward's estate is a measure which can only be authorized under circumstances of urgent and exceptional necessity.

In the nine districts in which rent suits are still decided by revenue officers under Act X of 1859, the cases instituted were somewhat more numerous than in the previous year, but not so as to call for any special remarks. In Chota Nagpore proprietors are stated to find it altogether impracticable to obtain enhancements of rents, and some other provisions of the rent law have been found inapplicable to the circumstances of the province. The introduction of a special rent law for Chota Nagpore is under consideration.

Relations with Tributary States and Frontier Affairs.

THE Lieutenant-Governor has every reason to be satisfied with the administrative condition of the Cooch Behar State and its progress during the past year. All the departments of the little state are administered under the general direction and supervision of the Deputy Commissioner, with a degree of judgment, energy, and apparently successful results, not inferior to those of the most forward districts in British territory. Cooch Behar, moreover, has this great advantage, that there is no lack of funds for expenditure on useful purposes: hence roads, schools, charitable dispensaries, the public library at Cooch Behar itself, and some other public institutions, are much more liberally supported, and exhibit comparatively more favourable results, than is the case in our own district. Its educational institutions also produce satisfactory results, and in proportion to its advantages and opportunities the progress of education in the state compares favourably with that of average districts in Bengal; while the public library at Cooch Behar is, as regards its stock of available literature, far in advance of any similar institution in Bengal outside Calcutta.

CHITTAGONG HILL TRACTS. The past year was not one of prosperity, and there has been no improvement in the material condition of the people. Owing to the excessive rainfall in July 1875 there were great floods throughout the district, which caused considerable damage to the crops, and more especially to those of the plough cultivators. Whole villages were in some places swept away, and those cultivators whose lands lay on the river-banks lost their entire crops. These floods were succeeded by an untimely drought, which again destroyed the second crop, which was planted after the waters had subsided. On the other hand the crops grown on the jhoom system on the hills succeeded fairly well, with the result that the ruling price of food-grains was a little lower than in the previous year. Labour, however, was somewhat cheaper, owing to the increased number of those who were obliged from distress to seek it. Measures were taken for the relief of the people, and these have been carried on during the current year.

In previous years the movements of the hill tribes across the frontier, either placing themselves under, or withdrawing themselves from, British rule, was a matter which repeatedly attracted attention. In the past year, however, there appears to have been little or no emigration or immigration. Since the close of the year permission has been granted to the Syloo Chief Van Hoya to move from his present residence and to settle on the Raojan Range, directly east of Sirthay. Within the district itself the gradual exhaustion of the lands in the occupation of tribes who follow the practice of jooming necessitates from time to time a change in their habitations. It was accordingly arranged after the close of the year that permission should be given to the Khumi and Mro tribes, who now inhabit the extreme south of the Sungoo Valley, to move to a position further north, on the right bank of the river.

In the report for the previous year the total collections on account of revenue were stated to be Rs. 1,28,625. In the past year they amounted to Rs. 1,25,937 only.

Revenue.

This decrease is in part accounted for by a decrease of Rs. 7,048 in the current demand for the year, due chiefly to decreased receipts from the river tolls. The current demand on account of the capitation-tax was about the same in the past as in the previous year, but the collections were considerably smaller.

The total expenditure during the year shown in the table submitted

Expenditure.

was Rs. 1,96,470, against Rs. 1,94,049 in the previous year. There was thus a net increase in expenditure of Rs. 2,421, against a net decrease in receipts of Rs. 2,687. The chief item of charge is necessarily that for "police." The amount expended under this head was Rs. 1,48,897, or a little in excess of the previous year.

While Rs. 32,198 was available for expenditure on district roads and police paths during the year, the cost of the

District roads.

original works and repairs actually carried out appears to have been Rs. 10,694 only. The importance of improving communications in a sparsely peopled district like the Hill Tracts, where supplies are dear, chiefly owing to the absence of proper means of communication, was pointed out in last year's report.

The number of criminal cases under trial during the year was

Civil and criminal justice.

128, in which 244 persons were concerned. Compared with the average of the previous five years, almost all offences show a decrease. The wants of the hillmen are few and easily satisfied, and their circumstances and remote position account for the infrequency of crime. It is satisfactory to notice that there have been no convictions during the year under the Arms' Act, and that illicit trade in arms and ammunition is said to have ceased. These results are attributed to the sanction which has been recently accorded to the sale of ammunition to approved purchasers by the Government officials.

The number of civil cases is said to have increased largely during the past few years, but there has been little difference in the institutions of the two last years. The number of cases instituted (excluding petitions) was 1,467 in the past, compared with 1,452 in the previous year.

The difficulty formerly experienced in filling up vacancies in the frontier police appears now to have been overcome by a resort to the practice of sending a recruiting party to the Nepal Frontier. At the close of the year there were five vacancies only in the total strength of the force, consisting of 535 officers and men. As to the conduct and discipline of the force, there are, the Lieutenant-Governor fears, grounds for apprehending that the control exercised over the men has not been as firm, or at the same time as considerate, as is necessary. Indeed, it is reported that on one occasion what amounted to mutiny occurred at Demagiri, and apparently the Assistant Superintendent of Police was coerced by the mutineers into releasing a man whom he had imprisoned. The punishment inflicted on some of the constables, who were prominent in resisting the orders of their superior officers, has been very severe.

The establishment of new police posts on the frontier, and the consequent scattering of the force, must necessarily in a measure tend to impair discipline. It is therefore incumbent on the Deputy Commissioner to see that the men are brought together and thoroughly drilled during the rains, when raids do not occur and they can be withdrawn with safety from the outlying posts.

But little has been hitherto accomplished in the matter of educating the inhabitants of the Hill Tracts. The Lieutenant-Governor notices, however, with satisfaction that the figures showing the results achieved in the past compare favourably with those of the previous year. In 1874-75 three schools were maintained, at which 87 scholars were instructed. Last year the number of schools was nine and of scholars 153. At the same time the expenditure incurred last year was Rs. 4,389 only, against Rs. 5,152 in the previous year. An attempt has been made to introduce primary instruction, but the success hitherto achieved has been small. The comparatively large number of pupils attending the normal school at Rangamutty, however, gives ground for hope that the teachers now under training will find pupils in the future.

As noticed in last year's report, the chief schemes which have from time to time been advocated and introduced by the local authorities for developing the resources of the Hill Tracts have not been fortunate in their results. The remnant of the colony which it was attempted to plant in the Myanmee Valley has been removed to make way for a forest reserve. The Goorkha colony has almost ceased to exist, and the prospects of plough cultivation are shown to be more unfavourable than has been represented in previous reports. Owing to the losses sustained by the recent floods, the confidence of the people in the success of the measure has been much shaken. As matters stand at present, it would seem that a temporary permission at least to jhoom has been given to most, if not all, of the plough cultivators. Effect has been given, with the sanction of Government, to the scheme long advocated, of localising the authority of the hill chieftains. The necessity for introducing it gradually and cautiously has been already separately impressed upon the Commissioner. Satisfactory progress has been made in the matter of settling the boundary between the regulation territory of the Chittagong district

and that of the Hill Tracts. This matter is intimately connected with the question of noabad settlements. When the demarcations have been finally completed, the result, it is hoped, will be to place under the operation of the general laws a considerable number of Bengalis who have been hitherto exceptionally treated under a procedure which was intended to apply to the hill tribes only.

Beyond the attempted raid which was noticed in the report of last year, there has fortunately been no cause for uneasiness on the frontier for many months past.

Frontier affairs.

The authorities are duly impressed with the necessity of maintaining an attitude of vigilance, and the recent establishment of several new outposts has added to the security of our territory. The local officers appear to have made extensive tours during the year, but with the exception of a small durbar at Ruma no general meeting was held of the heads of the several tribes. This is to be regretted, and it is to be hoped that arrangements will be made for convening a meeting during the current year.

The death of Rutton Pooea, a Chief who had done good service to Government, is a subject of regret, and the more so as it led to the commission of several barbarous murders regarding which special orders were passed by Government. The Lieutenant-Governor would only here again repeat that no opportunity should be lost of impressing upon the wild tribes the necessity of conforming to British law if they wish to take advantage of British rule.

The report submitted by Mr. Ravenshaw, the Superintendent, on the administration of the Orissa Tributary States during the past year, shows that these states have been for the most part well managed by their respective Chiefs, and that generally good progress has been made in carrying out the several measures which have been introduced for opening out the resources of the country and for advancing the moral and material improvement of the people. In all parts the seasons appear to have been favourable for the crops, and, except in a few of the minor states, in which the revenue settlements have not yet been carried out and some mismanagement still exists, the people are described as being prosperous and contented. The Superintendent spent nearly two months on tour, and was able to visit many of the principal tributary states to the north of the Mahanuddy; while the remainder, with the exception of Mohurbhunj, were visited by the Assistant Superintendent.

The revenue demand from the Government estates of Ungool and Banki was realized in full, a nominal remission of Rs. 35 only being shown against Ungool. The aggregate sum collected, including miscellaneous receipts, and Rs. 9,865 paid in advance on account of the current year, amounted to Rs. 61,501. The total demand from the Bamunghatty estate, which continues under the direct management of the Deputy Commissioner of Singbhoom, amounted to Rs. 30,570, of which Rs. 19,275 were collected: the balance was chiefly made up of demands which were not realizable until after the close of the official year. The tribute payable by the

Revenue.

remaining states, not under direct management, was realized in full, and large payments were made in advance by Keonjhur, Mohurbhunj, and Nilgiri on account of the current year.

The number of civil, revenue, and miscellaneous cases instituted during the year was 1,937, as against 2,290 in 1874-75 and 1,851 in 1873-74. The decrease is chiefly observable in the cases instituted in Banki, which numbered only 963, as against 1,329 in the previous year and 884 in 1873-74. The number of offences reported continues to increase. During the past year the total number amounted to 712, as against 651 in 1874-75 and 613 in 1873-74. The increase during the past year, however, is shewn to have occurred in the Banki estate, alone, in which the number of offences reported has risen from 162 to 240. Thus, while civil litigation has greatly decreased in this estate, there has been almost a corresponding increase in criminal cases. The great majority of the cases reported were petty assaults, thefts, and cases of mischief. Serious offences against property appear to be of very rare occurrence, and no cases of robbery and dacoity were reported. On the whole, the Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that considering the extent of the country the small amount of crime in these states is very satisfactory. Such cases as occurred were promptly dealt with, and the results generally were favourable. In some of the states an organized police force is maintained.

The great importance of opening out road communications through these tracts continues to be recognized. The cess which the Khonds have voluntarily originated for the extension of roads was fully and punctually contributed. Neither the Superintendent nor the Assistant Superintendent was able to visit these mehals in person; but many of the headmen came into Cuttack during the year, and the interest which the people take in the measures which have been adopted for opening out the country is unabated. The schedule of works for the ensuing year is now under consideration. The Rajah of Mohurbhunj has liberally contributed Rs. 7,000 towards the construction of a road running through a part of the Balasore district, and has commenced to construct a road in continuation through his own estate. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to learn that the Rajah of Autmullick has already experienced the benefits of the new road which he has made from the Mahanuddy to Hondopa, and that he has been enabled to export much produce from the valuable forests on his estate. The Dhenkanal roads have borne a good deal of traffic, and the markets of this estate and of Banki and Keonjhur are reported to be well supplied. A considerable trade has also been established with all these states.

One middle-class school and seven lower vernacular schools were opened during the year, and the number of pupils on the rolls on the 31st March was 2,899 as against 2,679 on the same date in 1875. The progress of education has been generally fair, and in some of the states it has been very satisfactory. The plan of making a knowledge of reading, writing, and accounts a necessary qualification for employment in the subordinate

revenue agency is reported to have worked well. In the Khond Mehals the liquor-shop tax, which is devoted to the cause of education, was levied in full, and the proceeds, at the rate of Rs. 5 on each shop, amounted to Rs. 2,205. Of this sum Rs. 1,729 was expended in the support of sixteen village schools, at which 499 children are educated. There is now also a large balance in hand from the receipts of previous years, with which it is proposed to open out several new schools. The great difficulty here, as in Autmullick and other remote tracts, has been to secure competent and well-behaved masters. This want will, it is hoped, soon be supplied by the local Government school. The Maharajah of Dhenkanal and the Rajah of Keonjhur have especially exerted themselves to extend the benefits of education to their people, and their constant and personal attention to the matter is, as noticed by the Superintendent, most praiseworthy. In Keonjhur no school fees are charged, and books, slates, and other requisites, are provided at the Rajah's expense. The principal school of the state has already produced pupils who are reported competent to act as teachers in the village schools. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe that the Superintendent is endeavouring to meet the great necessity for education among the children of the Rajah's families by the encouragement of private schools close to their homes.

It is with great satisfaction that the Lieutenant-Governor observes that the relations between the Chiefs and the people have been generally amicable, and that the feuds and boundary disputes between the different Chiefs themselves, which a few years ago were the cause of so much trouble and anxiety to the Superintendent, have now ceased. The progress which has been made in the revenue settlements, and more particularly in Keonjhur, Pal Lahera, Autmullick, Nyaghur, Autguruh, and Hindole, has been very satisfactory. In other states rough settlements are in progress, and the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe that every endeavour is being made by the Superintendent to bring this important work to a speedy conclusion with a view to relieving the people from arbitrary and uncertain exactions. In Keonjhur the Rajah and his people are on terms of cordial amity, as has been evidenced by the spontaneous action on the part of the latter in raising subscriptions for the liquidation of the debt due from the state to Government. This Chief, Mr. Ravenshaw states, has been so just and considerate in his dealings with his people, that he did not receive a single complaint during his tour; and he adds that he has never had the pleasure of witnessing such just and excellent management on the part of any Rajah, or such loyal contentment among the people. Sir Richard Temple has desired that the Rajah may be informed of the satisfaction with which the Government views the enlightened and liberal policy which he has adopted in the management of his estate.

Mr. Ravenshaw has also borne favourable testimony to the continued good management of the Maharajah of Dhenkanal, of the Rajah Bahadoor of Pal Lahera, and of the Rajahs of Hindole, Autmullick, Nursingpore, Khendpara, Tigeria, and Nyagurh, and to the personal interest which they have taken in the improvement of their estates.

and the welfare of their people. The conduct of the Rajahs of Talchere and Duspula, on the other hand, has been very unsatisfactory. The faults of the Rajah of Talchere would appear to have been chiefly attributable to his inexperienced youth and the influence of evil advisers. The visit of the Superintendent to this state was opportune, and it is to be hoped that the removal of the bad characters by whom the young Chief was surrounded, and the directions issued by the Superintendent, will result in the more satisfactory management of the young Rajah's public and private affairs. The misconduct of the Rajah of Duspula was prominently brought to the notice of Government in the report for 1874, and the vigorous action taken by the Superintendent to put down the oppression and the disregard of right and justice which prevailed in this state was approved. The Lieutenant-Governor regrets to observe that the Superintendent is again obliged to report unfavourably on the conduct of the Rajah. No further levy of cesses from the people has been attempted; but instead of carrying out the reforms which were agreed upon the Rajah has been morose, and has paid but little attention to the duties of his position. The state of affairs in Nilgiri and Rungpore is also shewn to be somewhat unsatisfactory, owing to the weak character of the Rajahs and their proneness to be led by designing and evil advisers.

The account given of the weather, of the crops, and of the health of the people, shows that in the past there was little to complain of, even as compared with the previous year, which was one of exceptional prosperity. There was a partial failure of the rubbee crops, but these are of comparatively little importance in the part of the country affected.

The absence of roads and bridges, and the great distance from the Commissioner's head-quarters at which many of the states are situated, render it impossible that that officer should, with due regard to his other responsible duties, visit more than a portion of the tributary territory during any one year. The Lieutenant-Governor hopes, however, that Mr. Robinson will be able to make arrangements for seeing more of these states during the present year. In the past cold weather the only state visited was Sirgoojah, which immediately adjoins the Ranchee district. But, as previously arranged, a meeting was held in this territory with the Rajah of Korea also, who attended for the purpose of being invested with a khillut on his installation, accompanied by some of the influential residents of his state. The account given by the Commissioner of the contented and apparently prosperous condition of the inhabitants of Sirgoojah is very satisfactory. It is stated that no persons had any complaints to prefer on the occasion of the Commissioner's visit.

The backward condition of the Tributary Mehals in the matter of roads and communications, the want of education among their inhabitants, and the absence of the means, and even of the desire, on the part of the chiefs to develop the resources of their several estates, are dwelt on by the Commissioner. But it is far from desirable that

new conditions of existence should be forced too rapidly on a people who are evidently not yet fitted to appreciate the advantages of a high state of civilization. The present system of administration appears to be admirably adapted to their wants, and is one on which much of their present contentment and prosperity is dependent. The Lieutenant-Governor is not therefore prepared to entertain any proposals for forcing the current of events in these particular states more rapidly than the progress of education and the improvement of communications will necessitate.

The account given of the condition of the schools in Sirgoojah is not very favourable. But a fair commencement appears to have been made, and the Lieutenant-Governor is convinced that when the warm interest taken by Government in the matter of the maintenance of these institutions is fully realized, improvement will gradually become apparent. It is a question worthy of the consideration of the Commissioner whether some of the illaquadars or more important landholders in the mehals might not be induced to send some of their children for instruction to Ranchee.

The officers who exercise the powers corresponding to those of sub-inspectors of police in regulation territory are apparently hereditary functionaries, remunerated by grants of land which they hold on favourable terms. Their position among the people apparently renders them proof against much of the temptation to wrong-doing to which they are exposed from the absence of direct supervision. The crime returns of the past year again exhibit some increase, but chiefly under minor heads. The total number of offences of all kinds reported was 487 with 980 persons, against 408 cases with 735 accused in the previous year. The comparative infrequency of serious crime among the simple inhabitants of these frontier states has previously been the subject of remark. The practice of going armed, and that of drinking to excess, however, lead not unfrequently to hasty crimes of violence. The administration of justice by the several chiefs has continued to be satisfactory. The result of the committals made by them is particularly creditable. Only three appeals appear to have been preferred from their decisions.

As noticed above, this was the only state visited by the Commissioner in the course of the year, and its condition was found to be satisfactory. The Lieutenant-Governor received with much concern the intelligence of the death of Rajah Bindessuree Persad Singh Deo Bahadoor, C.S.I., the late Rajah, a Native nobleman of whom successive Commissioners had always spoken in the terms of the highest praise, and whose merits had been fully recognized by Government. In consideration of the great expense attendant on the marriage of the heir-apparent of the estate, a grant has been sanctioned to him of Rs. 5,000, in addition to the Rs. 10,000 previously granted by Government.

The Rajah Rughoonath Seekur Deo has been restored to the charge of this state. The punishment inflicted on him for his previous misconduct will, it is hoped, have the effect of making him thoroughly alive to his duties and responsibilities.

Sirgoojah.

Gangpore.

The mischievous belief in the power of witches prevails in these states as well as in Gangpore. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe that the Chiefs have taken proper proceedings in cases where imputations of witchcraft have been made.

There was no serious crime in this state during the year. Towards its close the young Rajah was invested with the management of affairs. The Lieutenant-Governor hopes to hear that in his administration he will keep in view the words of counsel addressed to him on his installation by the Commissioner.

The total revenue of the state during 1874-75 (excluding the Rajah's receipts as a zemindar in British territories) was Rs. 1,90,898. In the past year this sum was exceeded by Rs. 22,573, the total revenue having amounted to Rs. 2,13,471. This increase is chiefly due to improved receipts from the royalty on elephants caught, from forest and grazing dues, and from criminal fines and court fees. It is also reported that certain new imposts have been levied on thatching-grass and dye-stuffs, and that an extension has been made of the system of charging dues on boats and rafts which moor on the rivers. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe that owing to the increased revenue thus derived, and chiefly by the exercise of better management and control over the natural wealth of the country, the Rajah was enabled to make considerable remissions to the cultivators at the foot of the hills, whose crops had been damaged by inundations.

The Rajah is not called upon to furnish any accounts of his expenditure. Details on this head are consequently wanting. It is stated generally, however, that hitherto there has been much useless extravagance and not a little pilfering. The Rajah is reported to have lately shown a laudable desire to restrict his expenses, and has already effected some savings by dispensing with wasteful displays and reducing the number of useless retainers. It is much to be regretted that the budget system has not yet been introduced. It is impossible, in the absence of strict control in financial matters, that sufficient funds can be made available for carrying out improvements and other measures for the advancement of the moral and material welfare of the state.

The Lieutenant-Governor observes that the superior officers engaged by the Rajah in administering his territories, and more especially the Dewan, are well spoken of by the Political Agent. It appears, however, that the Rajah is still surrounded by many persons who are said to offer a continual hindrance to social and administrative improvement; that a proper regard is not always paid by the Rajah to the antecedents of those whom he retains in his service; and that some important offices are filled by persons with no qualifications for them. The attempt which has been made to interest the most intelligent of the thakoors or chief residents of position in the administration of affairs, by investing

them with magisterial and other duties, should be encouraged; and as suitable opportunities offer, the Rajah should be advised to remove unfitted persons from positions of trust and power. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to learn that the relations of the Rajah with his ryots, both in his own and in British territory, have improved to some extent, and that the pernicious system of putting up farms to auction is being abandoned. It is of great importance that the survey and settlement proceedings, which are now being carried on in the Rajah's estate within British territory, should be supervised by a competent and trustworthy manager, and the Agent has been instructed to impress this upon the Rajah with a view to the early appointment of a suitable officer.

In reviewing the report for the previous year, the Lieutenant-

Education.

Governor remarked on the little progress which had been made in the matter of educating the people. With the addition of two schools opened out during the year, there are at present four schools only of all grades in the state, and but 173 boys on the rolls, of whom only one-half were regular in their attendance. The Rajah appears, however, to have now taken a real interest in the matter. Changes have been made in the staff of teachers, and orders have issued to enforce attendance. It is also proposed to institute several new schools in the course of the ensuing cold weather, and the idea of forming a girls' school at Agurtollah is said to be contemplated. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the Rajah will continue to interest himself in these matters, and that he will in particular increase the number of schools intended for the education of the children of the lower orders.

Police.

Three new police-stations and five outposts were established in the course of the year, giving a total of eight thanas and 15 outposts occupied by the civil police, who are said to be entertained to the number of 192, exclusive of process-servers. The condition of the military police, who are said to number 290 rank and file, and are distributed at seven different posts, continues to be unsatisfactory. The Rajah's tastes are said not to be martial, and it has been found impossible to induce him to interest himself in the improvement of his troops.

Criminal justice.

The number of cases instituted during the past year was 567, against 489 in the previous year. The increase is attributed to greater efficiency in the administration of the law, and not to any increase of crime among the inhabitants of the hills. Serious offences against the person and property are comparatively rare.

Civil justice.

The total number of civil suits instituted was 333 only. The hill people generally settle their disputes by arbitration, and the procedure of the civil courts is said to be simple and appropriate.

Medical.

The health of the people during the year is said to have been unsatisfactory. The Rajah appears, however, to have made liberal provision for their medical treatment, and the fact that 3,638 persons were treated at the dispensaries

established at Agurtollah and Koilashur seems to show that the people appreciate the advantages afforded them. Vaccination has unfortunately been hitherto neglected. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the Rajah will fulfil his promise to entertain a competent vaccinator, and to have the operations carried out on a systematic plan.

The account given by the Agent of the education and disposition of the Joobraj or heir-apparent of the state is satisfactory. He is now too old to be sent to any of the schools or colleges in British territory ; but the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the Rajah may be prevailed upon to permit the Joobraj to travel and to enlarge his mind by becoming acquainted with the affairs of the world outside of the narrow sphere of Agurtollah. The attention given by the Rajah to the enforcement of the provisions of the Arms' Act is praiseworthy. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the importance of the matter will not be lost sight of.

II.—ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

Surveys.

THE statement E1 in the appendix to this report, prepared and furnished by the Superintendent of Revenue Surveys, Lower Circle, shows the quantity of work estimated as likely to be completed by the professional parties within the survey year ending 30th September 1876. The figures given are approximate only. The aggregate area which this Department expected to accomplish was 2,169 square miles, giving an average cost of Rs. 79-9-6. This is inclusive of the survey of the Dhanwar ward's estate in Hazareebagh, the cost of which is to be borne by the estate.

Professional.

Statement E2 of the appendix exhibits the work performed by the non-professional parties during the official year from 1st of April 1875 to 31st March 1876.

The area demarcated by the Midnapore Survey party during the year was 1,610 square miles, against 601 shown in the report for the previous year. No correct opinion, however, can be formed from these figures as to the outturn of comparative work done in these years, as the demarcation of the jungle mehals, which were included in the total area to be demarcated in 1875-76, was pergunnahwar and not mouzahwar.

Midnapore Survey party.

The number of thakbust maps made over to the Revenue Surveyor was 2,686, against 1,907 during the previous year. The number of duplicate maps prepared was 3,030, against only 934 prepared during the preceding year. No survey registers were completed during the year. In addition to the above work, the survey party was employed in renewing boundary marks of 2,968 circles for the professional party, and in erecting 890 stones on the selected trijunction points of villages. The expenditure incurred was Rs. 51,882, against Rs. 51,638-6 during the previous year. The rate of cost per square mile was Rs. 32-3-7, against Rs. 85-14-8 during 1874-75, the demarcation by pergunnah being necessarily less expensive than demarcation by village.

Very little progress was made in the preparation of survey registers, the vernacular village registers of three pergunnahs, and the estate registers of four pergunnahs, being alone completed during the year, against three village

Hooghly registers.

and six estate registers in English and eight estate registers in vernacular in 1874-75. The registry work was in fact stopped pending the preparation of the collectorate lists of Hooghly and Burdwan. The demarcation work during the year consisted of measurements of detached blocks inadvertently left out at the time of the demarcation of the entire villages of the district. The number of miscellaneous cases disposed of during the year was 2,354, against 1,373 in the previous year. But the Commissioner reports that many of the cases pending in 1875-76 were disposed of by taking them into the new lists which were then under preparation, and the increase of work done is apparent only.

The Deara Survey is being carried on entirely by the professional Survey Department, and all that the Civil Department has had to do was—(1) to demarcate the base line after this had been settled by the professional surveyors; (2) to give aid to the professional party in securing the attendance of persons when required during the survey; (3) to erect boundary marks on trijunction points fixed upon by the professional surveyors.

The entire base line was demarcated during the preceding year.

To aid the surveyors under the second of these heads, the Collectors of Dacca and Furreedpore were instructed to depute a Sub-Deputy Collector as soon as the survey party entered their districts. Deputy Collector Tarini Sunker Rai, of Dacca, and Sub-Deputy Collector Baboo Mohendro Chunder Mozumdar, of Goalundo, joined those parties accordingly, and remained with them while working in their respective districts.

In Dacca 63 pillars were erected during 1875-76. The Collector explains that the work could not advance further owing to the trijunction points having to be revised by the professional survey. In Furreedpore several pillars were put up, but some 300 or 400 pillars, for the construction of which notice had been given by the surveyors when the year had far advanced, still remain for erection. Every endeavour is being made to push on the work as rapidly as possible, and with this view a special establishment has been deputed.

The net cost of the pillars built during the year has not yet been ascertained, as some of the materials of the last year were used in their construction. A correct account will be drawn up as soon as the work is completed, and a statement apportioning costs among the proprietors of estates will then be prepared with a view to realization of the expenditure thus incurred.

This is a survey of the Dhanwar ward's estate, in the district of Hazareebagh. Mr. Bedford, the Sub-divisional Officer of Pachamba, was not vested with the powers of a Collector under Regulation VII of 1822 till late in the season. On being relieved of his regular duties on the 27th of March last, he proceeded into camp and remained there till May in the settlement of boundary disputes.

The cadastral survey of the Khoordah estate was sanctioned by the Government of India in orders No. 333, dated 14th May 1875, and is being carried out by a professional party under Mr. C. Brownfield, Revenue Surveyor.

Whilst demarcations were in progress, the work of laying down a portion of the outer boundary of Khoordah (in exact accordance with that surveyed in 1841-42) was undertaken and successfully carried out along zillahs Dandimal and Huldia. The boundary from the Bargooi river on the east to the trijunction of Banki, Huldia, and Kuspala, has been permanently marked throughout with stones, which at intervals of 400 or 600 yards have been connected by traverse data. The boundary therefore can at any time be relaid or identified even if several of the stones be destroyed or removed.

The survey of village boundaries commenced about the latter end of February and continued to the end of May. Owing to the survey following so close on demarcations there was very little time to adjudicate boundary disputes, and consequently several boundaries had to be altered after survey.

The average size of each field has been found to be 0.13 acres, which is less than half the size of the fields surveyed in the Shahabad district by the Soane Irrigation Survey. Numerous springs issuing from the hills have been found and accurately measured and mapped. As large tracts of country are irrigated from these springs, the knowledge of their true position will assist the Settlement Officer materially in assessing the fields. Mr. Ravenshaw states that in consultation with the Collector of Pooree, the Settlement Officer, and the Surveyor, arrangements are in progress to push village demarcations well forward before next field season commences. He adds that the outturn of work done during the past season is much better than he had anticipated.

The survey of Khoordah being cadastral, statement E1 in the appendix, showing the work done by the non-professional party up to the close of the official year, has been filled in as far as practicable.

Settlements.

THE settlements effected during the year were 618 in number. Original settlements were, as usual, very few. Summary settlements numbered 347, and resettlements numbered 261. The actual increase of revenue secured was Rs. 33,051. The number of settlements remaining for disposal at the end of the year was 1,984, the estimated revenue being Rs. 10,74,021.

The work done by the Midnapore agency under Mr. Price, the Special Settlement Officer, consisted chiefly of re-measurement and reassessment. Out of 1,557 mouzahs comprised in the area measured, the assessment of 557 has been finished. Of the remaining 1,000 mouzahs, 300 being composed of confirmed or resumed rent-free lands, are not liable to reassessment. The work remaining to be done, therefore, consists of the reassessment of 700 mouzahs, which is expected to be finished in 1876-77.

The rates of assessment have been determined after careful consideration of the circumstances of the land and of the ryots; and though they are pronounced to be fair, it is to be regretted that the ryots of only a very few mouzahs have as yet agreed to the rates. The percentage of the increase varies considerably, but the least expected is 50 per cent., and on this calculation an increase of Rs. 1,33,000 in round numbers is anticipated in the two estates of Jalamutha and Majnamutha alone. The Collector of Midnapore has, however, expressed doubts on the possibility of realizing peaceably the enhanced revenue imposed on these two large estates, and he apprehends that there will be opposition on the part of the ryots to any such measure of increase.

The prominent event of the year in Chittagong has been the commencement of proceedings for the resettlement of noabad lands, the short term leases of which are falling, or have fallen, in. The quantity of land of all classes of estates, including noabad lands, coming under settlement in the Chittagong district, has been estimated at 380,002 acres, or 594 square miles, and is expected to yield a large increase of revenue. The Assistant Settlement Officer commenced work in October 1875, and by the close of the year measured 28,625 acres in 65,112 plots spread over 122 mouzahs. This little outturn of work is owing, on the one hand, to the small staff of ameens employed, and on the other to the many difficulties in the way, the plots being small, very much scattered, and intermixed with other lands. The people further added to these impediments by declining to point out the noabad lands, or by pointing them out wrongly. Rs. 20,881 were

disbursed as the cost of establishments employed during the year under report. Better results are expected during the current year 1876-77. It has not been found possible to erect more than a few boundary pillars. The extreme smallness and intricacy of the plots render it almost impossible to carry out the original plan that where no permanent natural marks existed a masonry pillar was to be put up for each group of plots. From the experience already gained, it appears that to adhere to this plan would necessitate an enormous outlay, and the additional work involved would very much delay the settlement operations, while the pillars would destroy a very appreciable area of land. All the local officers, therefore, are agreed that if an ameen's work is properly done, identification of the land ought to be easy from his map, &c., and that the project of having boundary pillars must be abandoned. The work of laying down the boundary between the regulation district of Chittagong and the Hill Tracts, as far down as the river Kurnafooli, occupied the greater portion of the time of the Assistant Settlement Officer during the last field season. Very little remains to complete the boundary, which follows as much as possible streams and other land-marks, so as to exclude from the Hill Tracts, and include in the regulation, as much as possible all lands in the occupation of, or owned by, Bengalis. "The work," says the Commissioner, "has been one of great personal fatigue. Streams had to be waded up and down, and a way had often to be forced up and down hill through untraversed jungle. Mr. Veasey, the Assistant Settlement Officer, deserves great praise for the energy with which he has pushed on the work."

In addition to the noabad and other lands now under settlement, the island of Kootubdea has been taken in hand. By the outlay of Rs. 3,500 during the last three years on embankments, and the exertions of certain resident cultivators, about 2,500 acres of land have been reclaimed and rendered fit for cultivation. Half of this area was settled during the last season at an annual rental of about Rs. 4,500. The question of attempting the reclamation of this island, which has already so often been before Government, has again arrested the attention of the local officers. The Collector has submitted a variety of proposals on the subject, the most prominent of which are (1) the construction of embankments at an outlay of Rs. 28,250 extending over three years, and (2) enhancement of rents on existing terms. By these measures, followed by a settlement of the island after five years, the Collector expects that Government will more than treble its present estimated revenue of Rs. 13,000, and more than double the rent-roll in the very best days of the island. The settlement of another island in Chittagong, called "Moiscal," has also been the subject of extensive and close inquiries, which show that Government has been wrongfully deprived of large areas of land which are liable to assessment, but for which no rent has hitherto been paid.

During the last quarter of the year a commencement was made in the work connected with the survey and resettlement of the Government estate of Khoordah, comprising nearly half the district of Pooree. The resettlement is expected to occupy about four years, and will most probably come

into operation just when the current settlement expires in 1879-80. The increase of revenue anticipated has been roughly estimated at over a lakh of rupees a year. The progress already made in preliminary work has been good. The general results are 287 villages demarcated, 200 village boundaries surveyed, and cadastral field survey of six villages completed. The demarcation is being pushed on, and the settlement of the six villages will be taken in hand as soon as possible. The settlement of these villages will be made a model for the rest.

The settlement work in the Patna Division has not progressed satisfactorily, but it is believed that this want of progress has since been remedied. In the remain-

Miscellaneous.

ing Divisions the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to say that a fair amount of work was done, especially in the Presidency, the Rajshahye, and the Dacca Divisions. In the Dacca Division the most important work has been the resettlement of the large Government estate of Tooshkally, which was rapidly proceeded with during the past field season by Mr. Gomess, the Commissioner of the Soonderbuns. Opposition was encountered, as was expected, but it was firmly met and put down, and more than three-quarters of the estate have already been settled at fair and reasonable rates. The Lieutenant-Governor accords due credit to Mr. Gomess on the tact and firmness he has displayed in the management of these operations.

The report of last year showed that there were about 4,000 villages remaining for inquiry, besides 773 villages in which the inquiries had been taken in hand but not completed. The 4,000 villages eventually proved to be 4,443 in number, and there were therefore 5,216 villages which had to be visited personally by the Assistant Settlement Officers, their areas measured or approximately estimated, and the lands classified. The number of villages actually settled up to the 30th June was 2,697, leaving a large balance still to be completed.

The Sonthal Pergunnahs settlement.

After making every allowance for the difficulties which had to be surmounted, the Lieutenant-Governor is compelled to conclude that the Commissioner's forecast of the results of the season's operations was too sanguine, and that it could not reasonably have been anticipated that the settlement would be concluded within the time proposed for it. Only two localities are mentioned as having involved unexpected delays, but the completed villages are only 40 per cent. of the whole number for settlement.

On the other hand the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to learn that the settlement has generally been accepted as satisfactory by both landholders and ryots. The pacification and contentment of the people, consistently with the just claims of the zemindars, was one of the main objects of the settlement; and it is the Commissioner's opinion that this has substantially been attained, and that the rent question will not in future be a source of agitation and disquietude. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that this anticipation will be realized; but it is of great importance that the local authorities should exercise vigilance to see that nothing whatever is levied beyond that which has been settled at this settlement, and that the fixity of tenure for which the settlement provides is maintained.

It was originally intended that in the Sonthal villages in which the community system was in force the assessment should be made in a lump sum, without any definition of the amount payable by each individual ryot. It was left to the community itself to determine how much each member should be required to pay. The Commissioner, however, brought to the notice of Government that under this arrangement rents were falling into arrears, and that in villages which had been settled as long as two years ago no attempt had been made to apportion the settlement jumma among the ryots. The Lieutenant-Governor accordingly sanctioned in April last a set of rules drawn up by the Commissioner, according to which a rent-roll will be prepared in every community village by a punchayet chosen on behalf of the headmen and the ryots respectively, and this rent-roll will define the proportion of the total jumma which each ryot is to pay. Precautions are taken to prevent the rent-roll being fraudulently or collusively prepared, and it is provided that no suit for arrears of rent shall be instituted otherwise than in accordance with the rent-roll. The practical working of these rules has not yet been tested by experience.

Occasion has been taken to improve the position and to increase the legitimate receipts of the class of village headmen. Formerly these officials received no commission on their collections, and they remunerated themselves partly by unauthorized collections from the ryots, and partly by the appropriation of a larger share of the village lands than they were equitably entitled to hold. Sir George Campbell sanctioned their receiving a commission of one anna in the rupee, or $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on amount of their collections. The Commissioner has lately represented that this amount is insufficient, and the Lieutenant-Governor, recognizing the importance of maintaining the office of headman as a desirable post, which the most respectable ryots will be glad to accept, has authorized the increase of the commission to a maximum of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., on the understanding that the proportion paid by the ryots shall not be increased, and that the additional allowance (if any) shall be deducted from the net rental of the zemindar.

The total number of cases on the files of the officers of the Settlement Department was 17,065, including 3,122 cases pending from the previous year. Of these, 10,625 were disposed of and 6,440 remained for decision on the 30th June. The appeals on the Commissioner's file were 154, of which 129 were decided. The greater number of the cases were for restoration to possession, and it is satisfactory to find that this is the case, as it affords evidence that one of the principal objects of the settlement has been fully understood by the people.

In the concluding paragraph of his report the Commissioner adverts to the general result of the Sonthal Pergunnahs settlements. He considers in effect that the procedure, though unavoidably summary, does yet involve as little hardship as possible, while substantially the settlement has been an unmitigated benefit to the agricultural community, so that all classes are disposed to accept it without opposition. The Lieutenant-Governor cannot assent to the Commissioner's remark that the settlement has temporarily deprived the zemindars of the free control of their property. The powers and duties of a landlord are not confined to the mere right to demand an enhanced rental,

and the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the zemindars as a body will show their recognition of the advantages which the settlement confers on them by exerting for the improvement of the country the legitimate influence which belongs to their position as proprietors. And further, the settlement has given the zemindars a well-determined rent-roll for a somewhat lesser amount which can and will be realized, instead of an undetermined rent-roll of a nominally larger amount which never was and never could be realized. Obviously the former of the two alternatives is best for both landlord and tenant. As regards the mass of the people, experience only can show to what extent the beneficial effects which are anticipated from the settlement will be realized. It is not to be expected that discontent and agitation will entirely disappear, or that the settlement will prove in all cases an effectual safeguard against oppression, or a sufficient inducement to the cultivation of habits of industry and frugality. But the Government and its officers will at least have the satisfaction of knowing that an earnest effort has been made to carry out an important social and economic reform; to reconcile interests which appeared to be in conflict without doing injustice to the fair claims of either party; to encourage the people to be provident by assuring to them the enjoyment of the fruits of their labour; and to dispose them to be loyal by placing their rights under the protection of the authority of Government.

Government Estates.

THE most important Government estates in Bengal are the Damin-i-koh in the Sonthal Pergunnahs, the Western Dooars in Julpigoree, the Terai in Darjeeling, the greater part of Palamow in Lohardugga, and the Kolhan in Singhbhum. The total number of Government estates in Bengal is no less than 2,514. The total demand of revenue from the Government estates in 1875-76 was Rs. 18,82,195. The unrealized balance of the year amounted to no less than Rs. 4,96,568, or 26·38 per cent.

It is evident, therefore, that full effect has not yet been given to the orders mentioned in last year's Administration Report, which required district officers to use their best efforts to ensure greater punctuality in the collections from Government estates. The balances in permanently-settled estates are, as is generally the case, almost entirely due from estates under the Court of Wards, and only a trifling amount (if any) of these will have to be remitted. The collections in temporarily-settled estates show only a slight improvement compared with last year. In Government estates the percentage of balances, which was 33·52 in 1874-75, still stands at the high figure of 26·38, and in ryotwari tracts the balances are 19·87 of the demand. These results are not sufficiently accounted for in a year in which there was no pressure of famine or other public calamity; and the Lieutenant-Governor must repeat an expression of his desire that district officers will pay specially careful attention to this department of their duties. Any Collector who fails to realize at least 90 per cent. of the demand on Government estates in his district should be required to furnish a special explanation; and it is not sufficient to say that the ryots were unwilling to pay in consequence of the cheapness of grain, or that the realization of rents in Government estates is generally slow and dilatory. The Lieutenant-Governor has called for a special report regarding the progress made in the realization of these arrears up to the present time. He hopes that this report will show that greater punctuality is being secured.

Only ten Government estates, bearing a revenue of Rs. 644, were sold during the year for a total sum of Rs. 2,179, and the sales were confined to the Dacca and Presidency Divisions. A list of Government estates to be recommended for sale is now under preparation by the Board of Revenue. Some plots of relinquished railway lands were also sold during the year.

The management of Government estates on the tehsildari system is in force in 15 districts, and the working of the plan is in general

favourably reported on by the local officers, especially in Julpigoree, Darjeeling, Chittagong, and Lohardugga. The results in Shahabad and Hooghly were very unsatisfactory, the balances in those two districts amounting to no less than Rs. 39,992 out of a total demand of Rs. 64,037. The total charges of collection in all Government estates under direct management amounted to only 5·8 per cent. on the revenue realized.

In the Administration Report of last year the Lieutenant-Governor was compelled to notice the fact that the fund for the improvement of Government estates had been very imperfectly utilized. This was not the case in the year now under review, the disbursements having been very considerable. Some difficulty still appears to be felt in complying with the rule that the funds raised on each estate must be laid out for the benefit of that particular estate. The Lieutenant-Governor, while maintaining the general principle of this rule, so far as it may be practicable to do so, would not desire that the rule should be so rigidly interpreted as to be an obstruction to useful expenditure, and he would allow the Commissioner to exercise a certain discretion in determining the objects to which the fund shall be devoted.

Wards' Estates.

THE valuable report regarding the wards' and attached estates in the Lower Provinces recently published by the Board of Revenue forms a complete manual, and contains full particulars regarding the person and property of all the minors under the Court of Wards. The report, in fact, is not merely a narrative of the transactions of the year, but it forms a manual of reference which will be of permanent usefulness and interest. The Board's report is for 1874-75, but the following remarks are brought up to the year 1875-76 as far as possible from the reports which have since been submitted on the subject by the Divisional Commissioners.

As regards the general principles upon which these estates should be managed, the Lieutenant-Governor adheres to the views which have been already expressed in previous reports. It should be the aim, he thinks, of the officers of Government to make a ward's estate a model of a well-managed property. On the one hand it should not be a primary object to add to the area of the estate by fresh purchases of land, or to accumulate large sums of ready money, or to raise rent-roll by enhancement which would impoverish the cultivators, or to resume plots of land which are held rent-free in accordance with the customs and feelings of native proprietors. On the other hand the due rights of the landlords should be maintained unimpaired, the punctual payment of reasonable rents should be insisted on, and more money should not be spent on improvements, or for such purposes as schools and dispensaries, than an enlightened and liberal-minded landlord might be expected to lay out upon objects of the kind. Surplus funds may always be spent upon reproductive improvements, which will return a fair interest on the outlay; but the officers of Government are not required, any more than the landlord himself could be required, to devote to charity, to education, or to other benefits to the tenantry, a larger sum than is in accordance with the circumstances of the estate and the position of the proprietor. The fiduciary nature of the management of these estates by Government must be carefully kept in mind in all expenditure which may be proposed. At the same time Sir Richard Temple desires to record an expression of his concurrence in the view taken by the Board of Revenue, that a zemindar who has leased out his estate should not regard himself as occupying the position of an annuitant, and is not relieved from all moral obligation to contribute to improvements affecting the condition of the cultivators. He should remember that he is still the zemindar of the estate.

Principles of administration.

The Lieutenant-Governor is of opinion that the same principles should be applied to the selection of the system which it may be thought advisable to adopt for the management of these estates. He entirely accepts the opinion of his predecessor that the farming system ought not, as a rule, to be permitted. But he would prohibit it, not only because it is inconvenient to the ryots, but because it is prejudicial to the best interests of the landlord. It happens that large estates are managed by the Court of Wards in two parts of the country in which the farming system is very very generally adopted by native proprietors, namely, in Behar and in Chota Nagpore. Experience has shown that in Behar objectionable results have followed from this system. The farmer has sometimes been a mere outside speculator, whose only object it was to realize all he could during the brief term of his management, and whose interests were consequently directly opposed to those both of the ryots and of the proprietor. The Lieutenant-Governor is therefore glad to be able to state that in the ward's estates in Behar great progress has been made in the introduction of a system of direct settlement between the zemindar and the cultivators. In Chota Nagpore, on the other hand, the farming system is not only in accordance with popular feelings and habits, but is found to be productive of practical benefit, and to afford the best inducement to improvement. The farmers on these estates are leading men of the ryot's own class, and the farms have often been hereditary in their families for several generations. It is for the interest of the farmer to extend cultivation, to assist the tenantry in a bad season, and to develop the resources of the property. The Lieutenant-Governor believes that where these conditions are found to exist, the true interests of the proprietor, which are inseparable from those of the cultivators, are in no way imperilled by a continuance of the farming system under the vigilant supervision of the authorities, and he accordingly approves of the orders of the Member in charge which have sanctioned a partial recurrence to the plan of farming leases in Chota Nagpore.

The financial position of each estate is explained at length in the Board's report, but in this place it is not possible to take more than a general review of the subject. The Lieutenant-Governor observes with satisfaction that a considerable number of estates have come under the management of the Court either on the application of the proprietors themselves, or in accordance with the testamentary dispositions of deceased proprietors. The condition of the tenantry in estates under the Court is stated to be generally good, and the relations between the managers and the ryots are amicable. There are, however, reasons which make it desirable that a fuller inquiry should be instituted regarding the condition of the ryots on some of the large estates in Behar, and orders for this inquiry have already been issued.

The Lieutenant-Governor lately called for a report showing the social position of the managers of estates under the charge of the Court of Wards. This report was furnished during the year, and it appears that the great majority of the managers are not in Government employ, and that the Commissioners are divided in opinion upon the question whether the employment of a Government servant is desirable or not. The Board of Revenue considers that it will generally be

found most expedient to appoint qualified Government officers as managers, but that a discretion may properly be left to the Court to appoint other persons when the circumstances of the estate or peculiar personal qualifications may render such a measure expedient. In this opinion the Lieutenant-Governor generally concurs. The Lieutenant-Governor remarks that the Paikpara estate, which is one of the most successfully-managed properties under the Court, is in the charge of a gentleman who is not a servant of Government.

The Chuckdiggee estate in Burdwan, the Nakrakhoondi in Beerbhoom, and the following estates in the district of Midnapore, are under the management of the Court of Wards of the Burdwan Division:—

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Jhargram. | 4. Kristopore. |
| 2. Jambonee. | 5. Beluria. |
| 3. Jamirapal. | 6. Roenan. |

The Chuckdiggee is a large estate which has been bequeathed by its late proprietor, Baboo Sharoda Prosad Roy, to his nephew, the minor, Lolit Mohun Roy. The estate is in good condition, but the Court of Wards on behalf of the minor is unfortunately compelled to be engaged in constant and expensive litigation with Rajessury Debea, the widow of the late proprietor.

In the 24-Pergunnahs district a step has been taken to improve the Satkhira estate by the removal of the late manager, but it is reported that the Deputy Collector who has been appointed has shown but a faint heart and no special aptitude or inclination for his work. Regarding the mismanagement of the Narail minor's estate in the district of Jessore, special proposals have been under consideration, which seem calculated to introduce greater efficiency, conjoined with harmony, as regards the shareholders of five-sixths of the estate which cannot be brought under the Court of Wards. The Lieutenant-Governor regrets to say that the management of the Wards' estates in this division has been generally unsatisfactory, although it is the case that since the close of the official year under review many improvements have been effected and reforms carried out.

The number of estates in the Rajshahye and Cooch Behar Division under the Court of Wards, and under the direct management of Collectors, by order of the civil courts, or in consequence of attachment by the criminal authorities, is 27 as compared with 25 during the year immediately preceding, two estates having been taken charge of by the Collector of Dinapore during the year under review. It is satisfactory to note that there has been a considerable improvement in the management of the heavy wards' estates in Rajshahye during the past year. The Bauleah and Pooteah estates, which were most neglected during the famine year, are now carefully looked after, and the balances of Government revenue, which are still due from some wards' estates, although considerable, are much less than those of the previous year. In the Tahirpore and Pooteah estates large balances are due from the ryots, in consequence, it is said, of the fall in the price of silk, which has affected those estates in which there is extensive mulberry cultivation.

The senior branch of the Tahirpore estate is reported to be in the best condition: all the debts have been cleared off, and a good sum has been invested in Government securities.

Mymensingh and Tipperah are the only districts in the Dacca Division.

Division in which there are estates of any importance under the management of the Court of Wards. In the former two additional estates have been brought under the Court's management during the past year. One, the estate of the minor sons of the late Mr. K. S. Brodi, a planter in the district, who died some years ago, and which was till September last under the management of Mr. W. B. Manson as trustee. On his death in that month, there being no one in this country who could legally assume charge of the estate, it was thought advisable in the interests of the Government and of the owners, who are now resident in Scotland, to take charge of it temporarily. This was accordingly done pending the receipt from England of a power-of-attorney to the agents in this country to appoint a manager. This, it is believed, has since been received, and the estate has doubtless been released. The other estate is that of the late Ram Kishore Acharjee, which comprises property situated in Mymensingh, Dacca, Bogra, and Moorshedabad, and yielding a net profit of considerably over a lakh of rupees. The estate is heavily involved, the debts amounting, it is believed, to between eight and ten lakhs of rupees. There has not, however, been time as yet to ascertain very exactly what they amount to, or what is the precise income derived from the estate: it is under the management of Deputy Collector Baboo Bepin Beharee Mookerjee, who has been specially appointed to the charge. The deceased, who died on the 13th November last, has left one son, a boy of between twelve and thirteen years of age, who is now being educated in the Wards' Institution in Calcutta.

In Tipperah there are now three estates under the Court of Wards, the largest being that of the imbecile ward Basharut Ally. Of this and the other two estates, i.e., those of the late Gunga Gobind Sen and Hur Coomar Roy, full particulars have been already given in the Board's report on wards' and attached estates for 1874-75. The only point in connection with their management during the past year that need be noticed is the commencement of a regular measurement of Basharut Ally's estate, the area of which is not known. During the past year the survey and measurement of 14,000 acres have been completed.

There were seven estates under the management of the Court of

Chittagong Division.

Wards of this division at the close of the year. They cover an area of 402,054 acres, and show a present rental of Rs. 5,29,202, paying Rs. 2,41,175 to Government as revenue, and Rs. 3,865 as rents to superior holders. The realization of rent everywhere continues to be a matter of difficulty, particularly in the estate of Miss Courjon, under the Collector of Noakholly, where a regular combination has been organized for withholding all payment of rent.

In Monghyr the only Court of Wards' estate is Khurruckpore, belonging to the Durbhunga Raj, under the management of the Court of the Patna Division.

Bhagalpore Division.

This estate is flourishing, and the rents have lately nearly been doubled. The irrigation works, which have now been completed, are the cause of this increase. By the construction of the head works, a considerable area within the Monghyr hills has been converted into a lake well worthy of a visit by any lover of the picturesque. The other estates under the Collector's management in this district are Phulberea and Chowthan, both of which have been made over for management by the Judge under Act XL of 1858. The Gadi Semeria estate, referred to in last year's report, has been released. The Phulberea estate, which was heavily encumbered, promises to emerge from bankruptcy soon, and the Chowthan estate is doing fairly. The minor is reported to be an intelligent boy.

In Bhagulpore all the estates under the management of the Court belong to the Durbhunga Raj, and they are situated in pergunnahs Narridigur, Nursingpore Coorah, Mulnegopal, Kubkhund, and Chye. The system of letting out the estates to speculative farmers has been discontinued, and direct management introduced.

The wards' estates in Purneah are—1st, Pergunnah Dhurumpore, belonging to the Durbhunga Raj, under the management of the Court of the Patna division; 2nd, a putnee in Dhurumpore belonging to the Paikpara wards, under the management of the Court of the Presidency Division; 3rd, a few villages belonging to the Chanchul estate in Maldah, under the Court of the Rajshahye Division. The second and third are petty estates. In the first nearly all the farming leases have fallen in, and the rent is collected from the ryots direct. There is another estate made over for management to the Collector by the Judge under Act XL of 1858, viz. Soorjapore. The late Ranees died leaving this estate much involved in debt, and it was feared at one time a large portion of it would have to be sold to liquidate the debts, which amount in all to upwards of five and a half lakhs of rupees. The indebtedness of this estate, and the joint nature of the tenancy, make its charge more like that of a fund than of a landed property. It would not be possible to take any villages under khas management unless the Collector could take in farm the shares belonging to the other shareholders.

In the Sonthal Pergunnahs the wards' estates managed during the year were the same as last year, viz. Rohinee, Sarawan, Narainpore, Sunkera, and Lalghur. Excepting Sunkera, all the estates are ghat-walees. Rohinee is in the best condition. The two next are free from debt. Sunkera and Lalghur are heavily involved. The litigation regarding the former has not yet been brought to a close. The rent collections in Narainpore were greatly hindered by the difficulty of making ryots, mustajirs, village jumma, and village rates, harmonize under the settlement.

There are altogether 26 estates under management in the Patna Division, of which 13 are under the Court of Wards and the rest under the control of the Collectors under section 12, Act XL of 1858. Many of these of the latter class are petty estates nearly insolvent: the trouble and cost of their management are very great, and the Court of Wards is involved in constant litigation.

The estates in Shahabad are those of Baboo Hetnarayan Singh, of Baboo Raghunandan Prasad Singh, of Baboo Kesho Prasad Singh, and of Baboo Despati Singh. Of these the first was released so far back as June 1875, and the third in April last.

The estate of Baboo Raghunandan Prasad has been under the management of the Court of Wards since April 1874, under Act IV (B.C.) of 1870. The estate comprises 52 villages, some of which (though their value is trivial) are held *benami*; 36 villages are held under direct management. The estate is free from liabilities. The annual income of the estate is Rs. 21,526.

The estate of Baboo Despati Singh is still a subject of litigation. The suits instituted against the minor by the creditors of his adoptive father's cousin have been decreed against the estate, and it has been deemed advisable to appeal the case decided by the High Court to the Privy Council, and those decided by the District Subordinate Judge to the High Court. Should the existing decisions be confirmed, the minor Despati Singh will be a pauper.

The estate of Baboo Kesho Prasad Singh has been released from the superintendence of the Court of Wards. The Baboo, who was a lunatic ward, was declared by the Judge of Shahabad to be no longer under the disqualification of lunacy. He has accordingly resumed charge of his estate.

The two estates of Pachakar and of Baboo Nirbhay Prasad were under the charge of the Collector of Gya under Act XL of 1858. The Pachakar estate is part of the Kunhouli property, and consists of about 25 villages. The whole estate is now under *khas* management. The estate of Nirbhay Prasad yields a rental of only about Rs. 5,662, and consists of small shares in villages. Two more estates, viz. of Abu Saleh and Gunpat Lal, lunatics, have recently come under management. The first-mentioned ward has a rental of Rs. 28,277. He is to all appearance a grown-up man, married, and has a daughter.

The manager of the Kunhouli estate in Mozufferpore was within the year removed from his post. The wards have been educated at Benares. The estate is in debt, and there are considerable difficulties in clearing it of its liabilities.

The administration of the Durbhunga Raj during the year has been a source of much anxiety to Government. The Commissioner does not allude to this subject in his report, and it was not necessary to discuss it fully. The circumstances of this estate have been adequately discussed in previous reports.

The Lieutenant-Governor has convinced himself by personal observation that the condition of the peasantry in those tracts of the estate which have suffered from drought in three successive years—1873, 1874, and 1875—is depressed, and that the people are much impoverished; that a certain proportion of the land has fallen out of cultivation; and that many persons out of work have gone to seek livelihood elsewhere. A careful inquiry has brought some difficulties to light which are now being remedied, and in many tracts arrears of rent have been remitted and current rents revised. In other tracts, where wholesale

remissions of rent have not been necessary, the current rents are now being revised as a temporary measure. A covenanted civil servant has been specially appointed at Durbhunga to effect a detailed measurement and on assessment of the customary rent rates. In this estate, moreover, it has been insisted on that the provisions of the law of distraint are not in any way to be exceeded. Doubtless if a good example can be enforced in the Durbhunga estate, an effect will be produced upon neighbouring estates. It may be added that, in the midst of much that is less encouraging, it is satisfactory to find that the authorities in the Durbhunga estate affirm the frequent existence of the occupancy rights under Act X of 1859, which has been so often denied as regards most parts of Behar. In the inquiries now proceeding, all such occupancy rights as may have actually accrued under the operation of the law will be carefully recorded.

The following remarks were also recorded in a minute by the Lieutenant-Governor on the 3rd February 1876 with reference to the circumstances attendant on the previous administration of the Durbhunga estate :—

“Although it would appear from the report by Messrs. Geddes and MacDonnell that the demands for arrears of rent have been made with an undesirable degree of rigour after such grave events as those of 1874, I trust that ere this any such rigour will have ceased, inasmuch as I have already spoken seriously to Colonel Burn upon the subject. At all events it will certainly be stopped now. In justice to the manager, Colonel Burn, and his officers, I must say that their intentions towards the tenantry have been considerate, indeed benevolent. They have done very much in excavating tanks, opening out roads, and constructing bridges. They have afforded much employment to the labouring classes. Though they may have taken what may be regarded by some as too rigid a view of their duties in collecting the rents on behalf of the minor, their ward, they have much improved the registration of holdings, and so laid some foundation for tenant right. And they have zealously and sincerely endeavoured to do what seemed to them right according to the undoubted and old-established customs of the country, that is, of the province of Behar. And if there is much in the condition of their tenantry to cause regret, still the unprecedented difficulties with which they have had to encounter should be remembered; and their devoted services during the famine of 1874 have been already acknowledged.”

There were altogether 14 estates in the district of Sarun under the management of Government during the year under review. The richest and most solvent of these estates are those of Baboo Trigunanund Upadya and Baboo Avadhbihari Saran Misr, having a gross rental of Rs. 18,085 and Rs. 8,655 respectively. These two wards are being educated at Benares. The rest of the estates are petty, and more or less involved in debt. Some of the minors are being educated in the local school at Chupra.

There were four estates under management in the Patna district, viz. the estates of Sirfiraz Husain Khan, Mussamut Shahodara Kunwar, Ramprasad Singh, and Deni Prasad Singh. The first two are minors under the charge of the

Collector. Sirfiraz Husain, whose estate yields an annual rental of Rs. 7,805, is being educated at Benares. Shahodara Kunwar is a girl of about fourteen years of age: she is married, and is under the guardianship of her mother-in-law. Her estate has a rental of Rs. 1,091. The third and fourth estates have come under management during the course of the year. The gross rental of these estates is Rs. 15,409 and Rs. 17,803 respectively. Ramprasad Singh is dead, and his son, Bagwant Narain Singh, a boy of about three years of age, is now under the Court of Wards. Deni Prasad Singh is a lunatic. He has two sons who are very young.

The following is a statement of wards' and trust estates in the Patna Division for the year 1875-76:—

District.	Name of proprietor.	Law under which the charge of the estate was taken.	Annual gross rental.	Government revenue and rent due to superior landlords.	REMARKS.
Durbhunga ...	Maharajah Lachmishwar Sing, Bahadoor, of Durbhunga.	Regulation X, 1793...	20,50,199*	4,36,107*	
	Raj Kumar Bameswar Singh.	.....	.....	.....
Mozufferpore	Baboo Jamuna Prasad Sukul, of Kunhoul.	Regulation X, 1793...	77,303	24,751*	
	Baboo Mati Prasad Sukul.	.....	.....	.....
	Baboo Kanta Prasad Sukul.	.....	.....	.....
	Baboo Siva Prasad Sukul.	.....	.....	.....
Sarun ...	Avadhbihari Saran Misr.	Regulation X, 1793...	8,655	2,245*	
	Baboo Lachmi Prasad Singh.	Ditto ditto ...	3,919	1,483	
	Baboo Sri Raj Chakar Saran Narayan Singh.	Section 9, Act XXXV of 1858.	14,511	5,499*	
	Mussamut Maracho Kunwar.	Act IV (B.C.) of 1870	1,555	319	
Shahabad ...	Baboo Raghunandan Prasad Singh.	Ditto ditto ...	20,414	9,435*	
	Baboo Kesho Prasad Singh.	Section 9, Act XXXV of 1858.	7,159	2,194*	This estate should have been under the Collector, not under the Court of Wards. It is, however, classified in accordance with the Judge's order.
Patna ...	Baboo Bhagwant Narayan Singh, son of the late Kam Prasad Singh.	Act IV (B.C.) of 1870	15,409	6,758	
	Baboo Devi Prasad Singh.	Ditto ditto ...	17,803	6,731	
Sarun ...	Baboo Bisweswar Nath Sahai.	Section 11, Act XXXV of 1858.	3,120	389	
	Baboo Narsingh Narayan Singh.	Ditto ditto ...	143	413	
	Shah Abdul Rahman Khan.	Ditto ditto ...	1,099	470	
Durbhunga ...	Shah Abdul Ali, of Alinagar.	Section 12, Act XL of 1858.	5,874	1,219	

* These figures have been taken from the returns for 1874-75, those for 1875-76 not having yet been received.

District.	Name of proprietor.	Law under which the charge of the estate was taken.	Annual gross rental.	Government revenue and rent due to superior landlords.	REMARKS.
Serun	Baboo Trigunanand Upadhyay.	Section 12, Act XL of 1858.	18,085	4150*	
	Baboo Ragonandan Prasad.	Ditto ditto ...	1,992	470*	
	Baboo Siva Shankar Prasad Sahu.	Ditto ditto ...	3,483	689	
	Lala Lachmi Prasad	Ditto ditto ...	1,217	285	
	Baboo Ambika Prasad.	Ditto ditto ...	721	†	
.....	Baboo Bindu Prasad	.....	.....	.....
	Baboo Mathura Prasad.	.....	.....	.....
	Shaik Muhammad Jan.	Section 12, Act XL of 1858.	1,049	169	
.....	Shaik Labur Mushin	Ditto ditto ...	†	†	Recently brought under Govern-ment manage-ment.
	Sirdraz Husain Khan Musamut Sahodara Kunwar.	Ditto ditto ..	7,805	2,261	
	Ditto	Ditto ditto ..	1,091	242	
Patna	Baboo Norbhay Prasad.	Ditto ditto .	5,191	2,199*	Ditto ditto.
Gya	Sayad Abu Salih ...	Ditto ditto ...	†	†	
Shahabad	Baboo Despati Singh	Ditto ditto ...	22,189	7,450*	

* These figures have been taken from the returns for 1874-75, those for 1875-76 not having yet been received.

† These columns could not be filled up, as the information is not yet available to Government.

The properties under management in Pooree and Balasore are insignificant. In Cuttack there are six estates, against which the aggregate revenue demand was Rs. 1,97,437, of which Rs. 1,71,319 was due from one large property. Kanika collections amounted to Rs. 1,16,862. Kanika is still deeply in debt, though vast sums have been cleared off, and we have now only two or three of the largest creditors to deal with. Kanika is managed by a tehsildar, who is also guardian of the insane proprietor. The estate is remote from the Collector's head-quarters, and difficult of access. It is hoped in a few years to get rid of the incubus of debt, and initiate substantial improvement. The remaining properties are all under one common manager, paid proportionately by each. These estates are all small and scattered, and afford little beyond bare subsistence to the minors and their relatives, and a moderate surplus for clothing and education.

The Asko estate in the Hazareebagh district in the Chota Nagpore Division has been released, owing to the death of the ward in September 1875 and its transfer to the legal heir. At the same time there was during the year an addition to the list of an estate in pergunnah Palamow, district Lohardugga, which was attached and taken charge of under Act XXXV of 1858 on account of the idioty of its proprietors. Thus, towards the

close of the year the number of estates under management was the same as last year, *i.e.*, ten in all. Of these, three have come on the hands of Government on account of the idiocy of their proprietors, and the rest owing to minority.

In regard to the liabilities of these estates, it may be said that six of them are solvent, or nearly so. In Chota Nagpore more than two-thirds of the debts have been paid and the rest will be liquidated as quickly as possible, as funds become available. The Nowagarh and the Supur estates in Manbhoon are very heavily involved. As to the former, there is now an appeal before the High Court in regard to the right of succession to the estate, and consequently there has been some expenditure in law charges.

Waste Lands.

THE waste lands over which the Government of Bengal exercises proprietary control are confined to the Soonderbuns, Darjeeling, Julpigoree (Western Dooars,) the Sonthal Pergunnahs, Chittagong, and the districts of the Chota Nagpore Division. No grants of waste lands were made during the year under the old rules. The grants made in the Soonderbuns up to date under those rules are shown in the following table :—

Grants of Waste Land under the Old Rules.

DISTRICT.	UP TO END OF 1875-76.			
	Number of grants.	Area in acres.	Present income.	Eventual maximum income.
			Rs.	Rs.
Soonderbuns	146	608,751	58,275	1,76,860

On comparing these figures with those furnished up to the end of 1874-75 differences will be found, which are owing to the resumption of a grant for nonfulfilment of the clearing conditions of the lease, and to a decrease of 150 beeghas in lot No. 14, under a decree of the civil court. The increase in the income is due to the currency of settlements made at progressive rates.

Leases of Waste Lands under the Ordinary Settlement Rules of the District.

DISTRICTS.	IN 1875-76.				UP TO END OF 1875-76.			
	Number of leases.	Area in acres.	Present income.	Eventual maximum income.	Number of leases.	Area in acres.	Present income.	Eventual maximum income.
			Rs.	Rs.			Rs.	Rs.
Soonderbuns ... ..	.....	...	...	.....	17	20,586	5,918	14,027
Darjeeling	1	800	300	600	53	45,574	16,990	26,689
Julpigoree	44	2,502	65	1,876	439	26,996	2,787	23,644
Chittagong ... ..	...	...	...	...	1	16	6	12
Total ..	45	3,302	365	2,476	510	93,172	25,701	69,373

Comparing the totals up to the end of 1874-75, *plus* the current statistics, with those of the present year, an increase will be found in the income caused by the operation of progressive rates of assessment.

Sales of Waste Lands under the New Rules.

DISTRICTS.	UP TO END OF 1875-76.			
	Number of lots.	Area in acres.	Price already realized, including part payments for grants resold and relinquished.	Price remaining to be realized from present grantees.
			Rs.	Rs.
Soonderbuns	6	18,182	46,207	12,977
Darjeeling	41	33,765	2,25,281	...
Chittagong	53	58,211	1,04,744	63,142
Lohardugga	3	607	1,518	...
Total ...	83	1,10,765	3,77,750	76,119

There were no sales of waste lands during the year. Here the discrepancies in the figures of 1875-76, compared with those of the year previous, are due to the relinquishment of one lot in Chittagong and the readjustment of the area of another.

Commutation of Revenue of Waste Lands.

DISTRICTS.	UP TO END OF 1875-76.				
	Number of grants.	Area in acres.	Government revenue at time of commutation.	Price of commutation paid.	Price remaining to be paid by the present grantees.
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Soonderbuns	17	99,337	2,578	2,56,663	8,000
Darjeeling	4	3,827	1,897	17,256	21,021
Total ...	21	1,03,164	4,469	2,73,919	29,021

No commutations took place during the year.

Steps were taken during the year to insist upon the lot-holders of waste land used for tea cultivation in Chittagong erecting permanent boundary marks where necessary. But small progress has been made in this matter, and the lot-holders are bound to fulfil their engagements next season, when, if not complete, the work will be undertaken by the Collector at their expense. In Darjeeling there will be no land available for settlement until it has been ascertained by survey what lands are really waste, what belong to private individuals, and what are the property of Government. The new rules for the grant of tea and arable lands in the Western Doorgs were fully explained in last year's Administration Report. During 1875-76 seven new applications for land for tea cultivation were received in Julpigoree. Under the Arable

Waste lands for tea cultivation.

Waste Land Rules 801 applications were made in the Buxa sub-division. Two-thirds of these, covering an area of 10,500 acres, were granted. In the Mainaguri portion of the Sudder sub-division 49 grants, comprising 2,235 acres, have been sanctioned and the land measured. In Lohardugga several applications were made by European gentlemen for villages in Palamow and Burkagurh, required by them for tea and coffee cultivation.

In last year's report the Lieutenant-Governor placed on record that fresh statistics had been called for, so far as they could be obtained, of the amount of culturable waste in Behar and North Bengal.

From the replies which have now been received, it appears that no such statistics can be furnished with any approach to accuracy for

the districts of the Patna Division. In

Mozufferpore and Sarun the area of waste land is inconsiderable, and no relief to the pressure of overpopulation can be looked for from those districts. The case of Shahabad is believed to be different, and the question will be settled there by the completion of the cadastral survey, while the settlement now in progress in the Durbhunga estate will provide detailed information for that part of the country.

Fuller statistics are given from the Bhagulpore Division. The Collector of Monghyr reports that out of 2,584,320 acres of land in the district, 19,13,272 acres represent the amount annually under cultivation. The total waste amounts to 671,048 acres, by far the larger portion (531,048 acres) being occupied by hills, rivers, and roads, and therefore unculturable. Only 140,000 acres are set down as culturable waste, and the Collector observes that most of this is inferior land, which would require some outlay on drainage and manuring before it would yield a crop. On the whole it appears that the bulk of the land in Monghyr which could profitably be cultivated has already been occupied.

Only approximate figures are available for Bhagulpore district. The total area of the district is 2,719,154 acres, of which 455,640 acres are unculturable, 1,310,268 are planted with rice, and 953,246 grow rubbee or spring crops. No estimate is given of the amount of culturable waste. Almost the entire culturable area of Bhagulpore has been taken up for agricultural purposes; and the Collector, who has had much experience of the district, believes that with the exception of portions reserved as grazing-grounds or purposely left fallow, a few square miles of sal jungle, and tracts of land thrown waste by the action of the Coosy, and other sandy tracts which would long ago have been cultivated had it been possible to do so, the extent of fertile soil in North Bhagulpore uncultivated is insignificant. In South Bhagulpore there are large areas of uncultivated and unculturable lands, composed of very stony soil and covered with small jungle. Small patches are now and then cleared and sown with oil-seeds, but these tracts are unsuitable for the introduction of the surplus population from any other district.

In Purneah, out of a district area of 3,235,374 acres, 2,355,945 acres are returned as under cultivation and 879,429 acres as waste.

This latter area includes 636,877 acres reserved for grazing-ground or allowed to remain fallow, and 242,552 acres which consist of river swamps and unculturable waste. The high-lying sandy plains peculiar to Purneah support in the rainy season large herds of cattle, which migrate in the hot weather to the swamps of the river Coosy, and there find food till the floods rise and drive them back to the high ground. These pastures, therefore, cannot strictly be considered waste land, although large portions of them may probably be brought under cultivation when the pressure of population increases in western Behar.

The Sonthal Pergunnahs contains a total area of 5,510 square miles. Out of this 3,107 square miles are actually under cultivation, and 2,403 square miles are uncultivated waste. The peculiar character both of the country and of the systems of cultivation in vogue renders it extremely difficult to form an accurate estimate of the amount of culturable waste; but the Deputy Commissioner roughly estimates that 800 square miles of the uncultivated area are occupied by rocky hills, roads, and rivers, and that 1,570 square miles, although now covered by jungle, may be utilized for agricultural purposes.

No precise returns can be given of the area of culturable waste lands in the Rajshahye and Cooch Behar Division. For Rungpore the amount of these lands is given, on the authority of the report on the district by the special Deputy Collector, as 112,706 acres. The Collector of Dinagepore reports that out of a district area of 4,126 square miles 2,673·78 square miles are cultivated, 1,043·97 are culturable, and 444·95 are unculturable waste. In the Dooars tract of Julpigoree it is estimated that 600,000 acres of culturable waste land are available for fresh population.

For Chota Nagpore no statistics can be given that are even approximately accurate. By far the greater portion of the Division has never been measured or surveyed. There is a very great deal of land which is uncultivated, but the unculturable portion is very inconsiderable.

III.—PROTECTION.

Course of Legislation.

THE Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal for making Laws and Regulations continued to sit after the close of the year 1874-75 until the 1st May 1875, and met again on the 29th of the same month, and afterwards on the 7th, 14th, and 21st August. The Council resumed its regular sittings on the 13th November 1875, and continued to meet till after the close of the official year 1875-76, holding several additional meetings for the purpose of discussing and settling the important measures which were under consideration. During the period embraced in these sittings the following Acts were passed and assented to by the Governor-General, while the Bills noted below were passed shortly after the close of the official year.

The Bill, which subsequently became Act V (B.C.) of 1875, was introduced on the 2nd of January 1875, and was noticed in the last Administration Report. It had been found that much of the value of survey operations in Bengal was lost owing to the boundaries ascertained by the survey officers not being secured by permanent marks. For many years the Supreme Government had pointed out that in this respect the province of Bengal stood alone; that in all other provinces boundaries were secured by marks, and that the charges for erecting and maintaining these fell upon the land. The survey officers had also insisted upon the erection of boundary marks as a measure necessary for the benefit of the landed classes. The Act therefore provides for the erection of permanent marks to secure the boundaries which may be ascertained by future surveys, and for the apportionment of the cost of erecting and maintaining such marks amongst the landholders benefiting thereby. The Act has retrospective effect only so far as regards the recovery of certain sums which had been expended by Government shortly before the introduction of the Bill in erecting boundary marks on the understanding that they should be recovered from the landholders.

The opportunity has been taken to remove doubts which have hitherto existed as to the legal power of the Government to authorize its servants to enter upon any land in order to make a survey otherwise than for the purposes of a settlement. The Act also provides that the

Lieutenant-Governor may order a survey of any land to be made for any purpose.

Act I of 1876, an Act to provide for the voluntary registration of Mahomedan marriages and divorces. (Received the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor on the 23rd November 1876, and of the Governor-General on the 11th January 1876.)

The reasons for the introduction of this Act, and the good it is expected to effect, as well as its scope and the nature of its provisions, are fully set forth in last year's report, and it is not necessary to repeat what was then stated. The passing of the Act has been received with general satisfaction in the districts of the Dacca Division, which are principally affected by its operation.

The primary object of this Act is to remedy certain defects in Act XI of 1849 (for securing the abkaree revenue of Calcutta) and Act XXI of 1856 (the Bengal Abkaree Law), and to introduce certain improvements in procedure. The opportunity was taken to repeal the short Act III of 1856 and re-enact its provisions. Sections have been introduced embodying the provisions of section 12 of 24 Geo. II, c. 40 (the Tippling Act), and of 25 and 26 Vic., c. 38. The object of these sections

is to discourage tavern-keepers from giving credit for small quantities of liquor consumed on the premises, and so to put a check on what is known as tippling, an exception being made in favour of hotel-keepers suing for the price of liquors consumed by persons residing on the premises. These sections apply only to Calcutta, the Suburbs, and Howrah. Provisions were also inserted with a view to check as far as practicable the sale of spirituous or fermented liquors, not *bond fide* medicated, by chemists and druggists within the same limits, and for subjecting chemists' shops and dispensaries to supervision and inspection for such purpose.

This Act re-enacts in a general form, with such amendments as experience has shown to be necessary, the provisions of Bengal Acts VIII of 1867 and VI of 1869, which applied only to the irrigation works executed in Orissa. Where applicable, the provisions of Act VIII of 1873 (the Northern India Canal and Drainage Act) have been incorporated. One of the most important features in this Act is the part which provides for the construction and maintenance of village channels at the

expense of private persons, and specifies the rights and obligations attaching to the ownership and use of such channels. The object of this part was to encourage those whose lands might be improved by irrigation, whether they were landlords, middlemen, or ryots, to combine in constructing channels by which water might be led from the canal to their own villages. Every assistance has been afforded by the Act to such co-operation. Power has been given of taking over land under the Land Acquisition Act for the construction of village channels, and the projectors of these works have been authorized, if they require it, to seek the assistance of the canal officers. As the scheme is new to the people of the Bengal districts, these sections have been

Act III (B.C.) of 1876, an Act to provide for irrigation in the provinces subject to the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. (Received the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor on the 22nd December 1876, and of the Governor-General on the 24th March 1876.)

drafted in considerable detail, in order to furnish a complete exposition of the whole system as regards private channels. In the event of the water supplied through a village channel being used in an unauthorized manner, and it being impossible to detect the wrong-doer, a certain joint responsibility is imposed by the Act upon the persons whose land has derived benefit from the water, or upon the persons who may have undertaken the charge of the channel.

When the Bill, which subsequently became Act IV of 1876, was introduced, its scope was confined chiefly to the consolidation of the law relating to the municipal affairs of Calcutta, which in some instances had been found difficult of interpretation, the provisions of all the Acts comprising that law, some ten in number, not being quite consistent with each other. The only material alteration at first proposed and retained in the Act was the increase of the water-rate from five to six per cent., the increased rate being confined to houses and lands situated in streets supplied with filtered water, the rate for the rest of the town being retained at the maximum previously in force, namely, five per cent.

As the Bill passed through the Council the constitution of the corporation was materially altered, Municipal Commissioners, partly elected and partly nominated by the Government, being substituted for the Corporation of the Justices of the Peace constituted by Bengal Act VI of 1863 and the Acts amending it; and a certain power of control, considered necessary in the case of a new and untried body, was reserved to the Government.

Other alterations of a more or less material nature were introduced, amongst which may be mentioned (a) the giving an alternative appeal to the Court of Small Causes at Calcutta from assessments made by the executive body; (b) the levy of the water-rate in advance from the occupier, he being empowered to deduct one-fourth from the rent payable by him to the owner; (c) removing from the Corporation the power of modifying or rejecting the police budget, their functions in regard to it being confined to a scrutiny of its contents and a power to submit such remarks as to them may seem fit, it being left to the discretion of the Government to pass or to reject or to modify the estimates prepared by the Commissioner of Police; (d) the introduction of what are known as the *bustee* provisions of the Act, giving a power to the Government to appoint a Commission and act upon its report in case the Municipal Commissioners fail to carry out the provisions of the Act in respect of any block of huts which, by reason of the manner in which they are constructed or crowded together, or of the want of drainage and the impracticability of scavenging, involve risk of disease to the inhabitants or the neighbourhood.

This Bill is intended to effect what was proposed to be carried out by the Bengal Municipalities' Bill of 1872, from which the assent of the Governor-General was withheld, namely, a consolidation of the law relating to municipal matters in towns in Bengal. Three laws were then, practically speaking, in

Act IV (B.C.) of 1876, an Act to consolidate and amend the law relating to the municipal affairs of Calcutta. (Received the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor on the 25th March 1876, and of the Governor-General on the 6th April 1876.)

A Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to Municipalities. (Passed by the Council on the 8th April 1876.)

operation—the Chowkeedaree Act XX of 1856, the District Municipal Improvement Act III (B.C.) of 1864, and the District Towns' Act VI (B.C.) of 1868, which provided for places a little more advanced than those to which Act XX of 1856 was applicable. While the two Acts of 1864 and of 1868 were working side by side, they brought to light various new requirements. Municipalities under the higher Act of 1864 wished to adopt something which their Act did not allow, and towns under the Act of 1868 were desirous of powers conferred by Municipal Act of 1864. Thus it became evident that what was required was to weld the two systems together into one, which should embrace all Municipalities, and leave each Municipal body to select such provisions out of those which the law provided as were good for its own purposes. In 1872 a Bill was passed by the Council, which formed one general law for all Municipalities, and provided for the repeal of no less than fourteen Acts scattered about the Statute Book. It further provided for certain other points which did not meet the approval of the Governor-General, and the Bill was therefore vetoed. His Excellency, however, took the opportunity to mention that certain amendments might with advantage be made in the existing law. During the past year the Government decided to undertake the task of consolidating the Municipal law. It has been the object of the present Bill to avoid the general objection taken to the vetoed Bill, on the ground that its tendency would be to increase municipal taxation, and to adopt those taxes only which are familiar and in force in different places already. As regards the one principal tax which will provide most of the funds in the Municipalities, an alternative has been allowed. Each Municipality may elect whether it will have a tax upon the value of holdings, as in the District Municipal Improvement Act, or a tax upon persons according to the circumstances and property to be protected of those liable to the tax. In regard to other matters the Bill is, generally speaking, a consolidation and reproduction of existing provisions.

The principle of allowing the partition of estates paying revenue to Government dates from the legislation of 1793, and the various enactments on the subject were consolidated for the last time in the Bengal province by Regulation XIX of 1814, the provisions of which have not since been materially changed except by Act XX of 1836, which empowered the Board of Revenue to quash a partition case, after giving six months' notice of their intention to do so. So long ago as 1848 the defects in the law, and the difficulties experienced in carrying it out, were brought prominently to notice, and it had ever since been admitted that amendments were urgently required, both to provide remedies and to determine certain important points which the law left in doubt. In the North-Western Provinces Regulation XIX of 1814 was repealed in 1863, and legislation on the subject had been repeatedly contemplated in Bengal since that date. The present Bill effects a material change in the position of the ameen, who discharged various important functions under the old law. He is reduced to the status of a mere executive officer for the measurement of the land under the orders of

A Bill to make better provision for the partition of estates. (Passed by the Council on the 8th April 1876.)

the Deputy Collector, and it will rest with the latter officer to suggest or the Collector's approval the manner in which the estate should be divided. Doubts are also cleared up as to the position of sharers in certain specific parts only of an estate under partition; lands held in common between the proprietors of two separate estates are made liable to partition; and provision is made for permanent tenures created by one of the proprietors of an estate while it was still held in joint tenancy. In order that the law might not result in the excessive multiplication of petty estates, it was provided that no partition should be allowed if the separate estate of the applicant would be liable after partition for an annual amount of revenue less than Rs. 20, unless the proprietor agreed to redeem the amount of revenue for which his estate would be liable. The Governor-General, however, pointed out that the principle embodied in this section was opposed to the course which had been prescribed by the Secretary of State for dealing with the redemption of the land revenue, and the limit down to which partition is allowed has therefore been reduced to one rupee.

The necessity of causing, in the provinces under the Government of Bengal, an authoritative registration of landed tenures to be made by the land revenue authorities has been recognized from a very early period of British rule. A regulation of 1793 made it compulsory on all proprietors of land to register their names, that is, the Regulation directed that the

A Bill to provide for the registration of revenue-paying and revenue-free lands, and of the proprietors and managers thereof. (Passed by the Council on the 15th April 1876.)

name or names of the proprietor or proprietors of every estate should be inserted opposite to the estate. This Regulation was to some extent obeyed. The skeleton at least of a register of landed tenures was then made, and has ever since been kept up in all, or nearly all, the districts. In some districts the register will be found to be more, in others less complete; in few or none will it be found fully complete; and in most it is defective, in not a few it is even very defective. The definition of the shares in each estate in the register has always been deficient. This deficiency has more and more perceptibly detracted from the usefulness of the register, as the subdivision of landed property has increased in the country generally. Besides this cardinal defect, another main cause of incompleteness has been the failure or omission of the land-owning classes to register successions to, and transfers of, proprietary right. No doubt it was legally in the power of the revenue authorities to insist on all proprietors coming forward to register. But evidently there were doubts as to the expediency of compelling registration after it had once fallen into partial disuse, for fear of the disputes and difficulties which might be engendered by any renewal of the attempt to ensure a complete and general registration. The expediency or otherwise of renewing the registers was much discussed during several years following 1837. The result was that the Government proposed fresh legislation on the subject. Serious difficulties were, however, pointed out by high authority, and the project was for a time abandoned. Subsequently the Board of Revenue resumed the consideration of the matter, pointing out that the legislature had been during recent years imposing many new duties on the proprietors of land, and that the authorities could not procure obedience to the law in

these respects without knowing exactly the person or persons who, being in actual possession, were really answerable for the discharge of these duties. As a general reply to the objections which had been so often raised, it was explained that if, in event of dispute as to the person entitled to be registered as in possession, the revenue authorities were empowered to decide the possession, provisionally and summarily, there would be no interference with the existing law regarding the prosecution and decision of all questions of right in the civil courts.

The Lieutenant-Governor therefore, on the 19th December 1874, intimated to the Legislative Council of Bengal his intention of asking its consideration to a Bill on the subject of the compulsory registration of the possessory titles in land. The Bill was shortly afterwards introduced into Council in the beginning of 1875 by the Hon'ble Mr. Dampier, and after lengthened discussion and inquiry under his supervision was passed by the Council in April 1876, received the assent of the Lieutenant-Governor, and after rectification of one matter of detail received the assent of the Governor-General on the 9th August.

In 1874 and 1875 it was in contemplation to bring before the legislature a Bill for the appointment of managers in joint undivided estates, in order to prevent the tenantry being harassed by several collections of rent being made by the various sharers—a grievance of which there had been much complaint. But it became evident that this measure would be distasteful to the proprietary classes; and, while adhering to his desire to protect the tenantry in this respect, the Lieutenant-Governor was disposed to seek for some other means of fulfilling it. As the Bill for the registration of possessory titles advanced towards maturity, it appeared that some sections might be introduced protecting the tenantry of such estates against the chance of being troubled to pay rent more than once to several sharers in the estate; and that if sections to this effect should be passed, the necessity of enacting a law for the appointment of managers in the joint undivided estates might be obviated. Opinions tending in this direction were specially urged by some of the native members of the Legislative Council. After some discussion, and with the assistance of the Advocate-General, some sections with this view were inserted in the Bill and passed. Consequently the Government has relinquished the intention of proposing a Bill for appointing managers in these estates, for the present at all events—until it can be seen whether the desired protection is afforded to the tenantry by this Land Registration Act. The Bill then, for the registration of possessory titles, has become law under the title of the Land Registration Act VII (B.C.) of 1876. It remains to cause it to be carried into effect with promptitude and completeness. The object of the Act is nothing less than the registration of all proprietary titles in the lands of these provinces, not only of the lands paying revenue, but also of lands declared to be revenue-free. The importance of such a registration in these extensive provinces, where the landed interest is the greatest of all interests, is too manifest to need any exposition here. The magnitude of the task will be understood when it is recollected that there are in these provinces more than 150,000 estates on the revenue-roll. Besides, there are numerous revenue-free estates, mostly very small,

the total number of which cannot be exactly stated until this registration shall have been completed.

This Bill is intended to afford a speedy and effectual means for the settlement of disputes regarding rent, such as recently arose in Pubna and other Eastern districts. As soon as the Act is declared to be in force in a tract of country, the Collector proceeds to inquire into any matter of fact specified in the instructions of Government, makes a report thereon through the Commissioner to the Board of Revenue, and eventually determines the matter so specified in accordance with instructions given by the Board. The cardinal point of the Bill is that from the receipt of these instructions the Collector, and not the civil court, is empowered to try all suits (relating to the tract of the country) of the nature of those specified in section 23 of Act X of 1859. During the passage of the Bill through Council certain rules for the determination of the rates of rent in enhancement suits were introduced to assist the Collector in arriving at a correct conclusion. It is left entirely optional with the Collector to apply the principles laid down in these rules. The Act will remain in force only for three years.

At the meeting of the 24th April 1876 the President made a statement of the course of legislation during the past year, and laid before the Council a programme of the further measures which it was proposed to introduce, and which may be briefly stated as follows:—

Of the measures referred to in the programme for the previous year, there yet remained the consolidation of the laws relating to excise or abkaree, a Bill for which, it is hoped, will be prepared during the recess; and a Bill for the alteration of the rent-law in the Chota Nagpore province, which has been referred to the Commissioner of that province with reference to some practical details. Of new measures there were some improvements in the law for the management of estates under the Court of Wards; a measure regarding ghatwal tenures in parts of Burdwan, Bankoora, Midnapore, and Singhbhum districts; the consolidation into one law of the various regulations relating to the land revenue, which it is thought, owing to the frequent repeal of obsolete enactments, will not be very difficult to effect, and which, if passed, will provide a short and available manual for authoritative guidance in revenue affairs, the framing of some definite rules for the determination of the rate of rent in Bengal; and finally a small measure proposing the extension of the Hooghly and Burdwan Drainage Act (Act V of 1871) to all drainage schemes in the Hooghly and Burdwan districts.

Of all the pending Bills very much the most important is that proposing some definite rules for the determination of the rate of rent in Bengal. A short account of the reasons for the introduction of this Bill, and of the principles on which the Bill is based, will be found in the chapter of this report on Changes of Administration.

Police.

THE system adopted in administering the Police Department was the same in the past year as in those immediately preceding it, and but few changes occurred in the *personnel* of the force in its higher grades. The chief event of the year was the visit of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to Calcutta. The excellence of the police arrangements then made elicited at the time the approbation of Government. Of the extra duties incidental to the occasion, the Bengal police undertook a fair share, and performed the work required from them with zeal and efficiency.

There were no exceptional circumstances during the past year to affect crime, such as the famine and scarcity which prevailed in many parts of these provinces in 1874. Nor were the police required, as during the previous year, to undertake miscellaneous duties of various descriptions connected with the guard and transport of grain, and the general operations of relief which were for several months so extensively carried on, and which deprived the Police Department of the services of many of its most efficient members. In the absence of any general or special causes which have affected crime, or which have interfered with the ordinary duties of the police force, the past year affords on the whole a fair criterion of the normal state of crime in these provinces, and of the general degree of efficiency which has been attained by the police.

In so far as the police may be judged by their success in obtaining convictions in those classes of crime which are usually committed by professional criminals, and which require detective ability to repress, by the diminution of such crimes as are for the most part deliberately planned and are not the result of sudden impulse, and by the decrease in the number of cases of proved misconduct which have called for judicial or departmental punishment, it must be held that on the whole there has been an improvement in the general conduct and efficiency of the force. In some districts this improvement has been marked, while in others it has not been so conspicuous. As noticed in the report for 1874-75, the efficiency of the police is dependent on the exertions of District Magistrates and of the Superintendents of Police who are placed in immediate charge; and the results attained in each district are shown to correspond very closely with the amount of interest and labour taken by the local officers in superintending and directing the proceedings of the police, with the efforts made to instruct, utilize, and improve the status of the village police, and with the

degree of watchfulness and control which has been exercised over the local bad characters.

Petty crime, it is true, has been shown to have slightly increased during the past year—a result which must be looked for as the people become gradually accustomed to look to our courts for the redress of petty injuries, and as with the progress of education they become more keenly alive to their individual rights. But in serious crime, and especially in that class of crime which it must be the first care of an efficient police administration to repress, there has been a very marked decrease. The figures of 1874 were no doubt swelled to some extent by offences attributable to the scarcity which then prevailed; but making every allowance for this, the general results obtained during the past year afford just ground for congratulation and hope for the future.

The harmony which throughout the year has characterised the relations of the superior officers of the Police Department with the Magistracy is to the Lieutenant-Governor a matter for satisfaction. The instances in which he has had to take notice of any misunderstandings or disagreements have been extremely rare and very exceptional in their circumstances.

Under the police system which was discredited and abolished some fifteen years ago, a chief matter for complaint was the want of some one to intervene between the investigating officers and the District Magistrates. It was found that no efficient control could be exercised over the former officers when they were not liable to be visited at frequent and unexpected intervals. The appointment of selected European officers to every district to superintend the police to some extent supplied the want; but it was never intended that on them the whole burden of inspection should fall. It was primarily, though not exclusively, with a view to securing better supervision that inspectors were appointed. This matter is noticed, as there is an increasing disposition on the part of district officers to require inspectors to perform the duties of investigating officers. The Lieutenant-Governor observes that the result of such a practice must necessarily be to identify the interests of inspectors with those of their subordinates, and to deprive inspections made by them of much of their value. It further subverts to some extent the principle on which the several grades of the organised police force were constituted. District officers, it is true, have much difficulty to contend with, owing to the inferiority of the pay and status of the lower ranks of sub-inspectors and head constables, as compared with the responsible duties which they are required to perform. The raising of the status of the lower grades of native officers is the most important requirement of the department, and will receive attention on a favourable opportunity.

The total expenditure on police during the past year was Rs. 37,72,741, against a budget grant of Rs. 39,51,294. While this statement includes a contribution of Rs. 37,130 made by Government towards the cost of the police employed in some of the larger municipalities in the interior, it does not include the further sums of Rs. 2,34,834 paid by Government, and of Rs. 4,00,000 paid by the Commissioners of the Town

Cost of the police.

of Calcutta and its Suburbs and of the Port to meet the cost of the police employed at the presidency, as this police is not under the control of the Inspector-General, but of the Commissioner of Police. Similarly, the contributions made by the municipalities in the interior and from other local sources towards the cost of their police, and amounting to over Rs. 5,00,000, have been excluded from the statement.

The total sanctioned strength of the regular police under the control of the Inspector-General during the past year was 86 superior officers and 19,447 inferior officers and men. The distribution of the rank and file of the force during the past two years was as follows:—

	1874.	1875.
General police duties	15,294	15,519
Jail guards	1,656	1,858
Magazine guards	210	210
Treasury, salt, and opium guards ...	1,430	1,425
Frontier guards	613	635

There is no variation between the figures of the two years calling for any special remarks. To the above must be added the force of municipal police employed in the several municipalities in the interior. The strength of this police is stated to be 6,436.

Special instructions have been issued during the past year for the introduction and working of the chowkidaree law, Act VI of 1870, into a large number of districts. The importance of this measure, which has been undertaken with a view to improving the status of the village police, on whom so much depends for the detection and prevention of crime, cannot be over-estimated. The reports which have been received from the Divisional Commissioners, showing the progress which has been made in each district in introducing the measure, have been separately dealt with, and prove that, where the matter has been taken up with interest and energy, it has been accepted by the people, and cannot fail to conduce to the general improvement of the police administration of the province.

Dissatisfaction is expressed at the existing police arrangements in the cantonments of Barrackpore and Dum-Dum. This is a matter which will be considered on separate representation. Nothing in the working of the railway, road, and river police appears to call for any present orders. But the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe that it is stated by Mr. Hankey that the high-roads throughout these provinces, as well as the principal waterways of Southern and Eastern Bengal, are now in a remarkable degree free from crime, and that highway robbery, which was so prevalent in the Manbhoom and Hazareebagh districts, has altogether ceased since the introduction of a more complete system of road patrol. Judging by results, the policy of stationing a large body of police on the Lushai border of the Chittagong Hill Tracts district has been successful. Not a single raid or disturbance is reported to have occurred on the frontier during the past year.

Considering the difficulty of putting down the crime of rioting in the Eastern districts, the Lieutenant-Governor doubts whether sufficient recourse has been had to the preventive measures authorized by law in the quartering of extra

police in the disturbed districts. Two parties of such police were during the year entertained in the district of Backergunge, and two also in the district of Tipperah, with the best results. In the Sonthal Pergunnahs a large party of extra police was stationed, but the cost was borne by Government.

The number of the regular police returned as able to read and write is given as 8,808, besides 109 in the Government railway police, making a total of 8,917, as against 8,776 of the previous year, and it is stated that in addition 2,979 men were under instruction. These figures indicate some improvement; still the fact that nearly half the men in the entire force are wholly wanting in education must be very detrimental to efficiency. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that, notwithstanding the difficulties mentioned, the Inspector-General will use his best endeavours to promote education among the men, and will impress all District Superintendents with the importance of this matter.

In reviewing the report for the previous year, the Lieutenant-Governor noticed that it was a reproach to the Police Department that any of its members should be concerned in cases of torture at all, even in the slightest degree, and called upon all officers to do their utmost to extirpate the evil. It is satisfactory to notice that the returns for the year now under review show that not a single charge of torture which could bear the test of judicial examination was preferred. It appears, however, that although in as many as 25 districts no charges of extortion or bribery were brought against the police, in others several native officers and men were convicted of these offences. These are grievous faults, and must be equally repressed. The Lieutenant-Governor would again repeat the instructions which have been issued, impressing upon all superior officers the necessity of exercising a vigilant control over their men.

As regards the general conduct of the police force, it is satisfactory to observe that there has been a considerable decrease in the number of cases in which it was found necessary to inflict punishment, either judicially or departmentally. The number punished judicially and departmentally has been 600 and 3,973 (including dismissals and excluding railway police) respectively, as against 688 and 4,028 during the previous year. The Lieutenant-Governor records with pleasure that as many as 643 native officers and men were especially rewarded for more than common ability, address, and courage exhibited in the execution of their duties. He hopes earnestly that each year's returns will show an increasing number in this happy respect. In all 4,149 men now wear one or more good-conduct rings, and this number exceeds the number thus decorated at the close of the previous year by 1,063.

The relief afforded to the police in the matter of process-serving by the rules lately introduced for the entertainment of special process establishments by Magistrates continues to be very marked. The following figures, taken from the report, would seem to indicate that increased attention

is now shown to the instructions which have from time to time been issued on the subject:—

	1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.
Warrants served by the police	52,072	47,464	32,026	31,540
Summonses	412,290	354,504	181,183	164,728
Other orders	232,805	225,712	216,777	225,636

This table shows that in the course of three years the work of the force in this particular branch has been reduced by nearly one-half.

The amount of inspection work performed by the superior officers of the department during the year was considerable. In a large number of districts the stations and outposts are said to have been most thoroughly inspected by the District Superintendents. The Lieutenant-Governor is disappointed, however, to observe that the duty of inspection was insufficiently performed in no less than eleven districts, some of them important as regards the amount of crime committed. These omissions have not been explained. In reference to the remarks which were recorded in the last year's report, the Lieutenant-Governor has again drawn attention to the importance of these duties, and reminded the District Magistrates as well as the police-officers concerned of their responsibilities in this particular.

No change was made in the strength or cost of the town or river police in Calcutta during the year. In the suburbs reductions were made in the salaries of officers and in the number of constables, under a scheme previously approved by Government. The number of dismissals continues to show a satisfactory decrease. On the whole the conduct of the force, with the exception of the European sergeants and constables, appears to have improved. The Lieutenant-Governor, however, regrets to observe that it was found necessary to fine so many as 507 constables. He would prefer to see offenders subjected to extra drill or to some other punishment not involving loss of stipend. It is satisfactory to observe that some advance continues to be made in raising the number of Bengali constables in the force. The superiority of up-country constables over Bengalis for purposes of watch and ward is undoubted; but the attempt to procure intelligent Bengali recruits, who will submit to discipline, is of vital importance to increasing the popularity as well as the efficiency of the force, and the Lieutenant-Governor desires that it may not be relaxed.

The general result of the figures given below is to show that, as regards cognizable crime, there was a considerable decrease in the number of cases reported, and a proportionate decrease in the number of cases declared

COGNIZABLE CRIME.

false and not inquired into in the past as compared with the previous year.

	1873.	1874.	1875.
Number of cognizable cases reported	114,828	126,122	120,638
" declared false	26,822	26,981	26,055
" not inquired into	13,289	14,325	13,430
Balance for inquiry	74,777	84,866	81,344

The decrease in crime is ascribed to the absence of the exceptional causes which were at work in 1874, and which had their origin in the famine. This conclusion is borne out by the fact that it is in those districts where the famine appeared to have had the effect of increasing petty crime that the decrease is now observable, and notably in the districts of the Patna, Rajshahye, and Bhagulpore Divisions. Apart from this, the Inspector-General remarks that he cannot understand on what principle a diminution in crime can be expected, seeing that the tendency of petty crime is to increase, while it is only in serious offences that deterrent sentences, coupled with police efficiency, can be expected to have any effect. Without altogether assenting to this view, the Lieutenant-Governor is willing to admit that it is the more serious types of crime which demand the chief attention of the police, and that it is therefore on a comparison of the results of their action in respect to those crimes in successive years that a conclusion as to the efficiency or otherwise of the force must be chiefly based.

The following table shows the proportion in which the cognizable crime reported and accepted as true has been distributed under the several recognized heads of crime during the past three years.

CLASS OF CRIME.	1873.	1874.	1875.
Class I.—Offences against the State, &c.	2,929	2,606	2,755
" II.—Serious offences against the person, &c.	4,392	3,905	4,184
" III.—Ditto ditto against person or property, &c.	24,631	23,615	23,937
" IV.—Minor offences against the person	4,126	6,495	9,569
" V.—Ditto ditto property	40,267	43,343	38,093
" VI.—Other offences not specified above	13,765	13,273	15,308
" VII.—Offences under special laws	872	951	726

From the above it is apparent that against a large decrease in offences against property, both serious and minor, there has been an increase of 3,367 cases in minor offences against the person, and an increase of 279 cases in serious offences against the person.

If the relative criminality of the different districts can be judged by the number of true cases to population, it appears that the largest proportion of cognizable crime occurred in the districts of Darjeeling, Pooree, Patna, Moorshedabad, Hooghly, and the 24-Pergunnahs, and that within the past three years there has been, according to this test, a very large increase of crime in the two districts last mentioned. The proportion of true cases to population was, on the other hand, the smallest in the districts of

Bhagulpore, Lohardugga, Mymensingh, Cuttack, Rungpore, Sarun, Chumparun, and Purneah. In considering these figures, however, it is material to notice that all the percentages greatly depend on the number of cases which may have been declared to be false, and it is a subject for remark that in no district was there a larger proportion of cases struck off as such during the past year than in Mymensingh, and that in Bhagulpore and Cuttack the increase in the percentage of cases so treated has been very marked. Taking the province as a whole, it is observed that the percentage of cases declared to be false and never to have occurred was precisely the same in the past as in the previous year; and that both these years have exhibited a slight improvement as compared with 1873, as shown in the margin. The constancy of these results has often been remarked. In last year's administration report it was said, however, that the fluctuations in the figures for individual districts in

		Percentage of cases declared to be false.
1873	...	23
1874	...	21
1875	...	21

successive years led to the inference that exaggeration was accountable for the rejection of many complaints. The Inspector-General now suggests that many of the cases entered as false would have been more accurately described as "non-cognizable."

From a consideration of the figures now submitted, which again show the same fluctuations as previously remarked upon, the Lieutenant-Governor thinks it necessary again to caution officers against too readily declaring an offence to have been falsely charged and not to have occurred. This should never be done unless distinct grounds can be assigned for the conclusion arrived at; and when it is merely considered that a case is insufficiently proved or possibly false, it would not be correct to strike it out as really false. Although so large a number of cases were declared to be false, the Lieutenant-Governor has again to notice the small number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted against the offenders, and the still smaller number in which convictions were obtained. He must regard these results generally as unsatisfactory, and as showing that cases are too frequently declared to be false without sufficient warrant.

The similarity of the results in successive years in respect to the proportion of offences reported and not inquired into is very remarkable, while the discrepancies in the practice as regards different districts continue to be as marked as ever. For the past year the proportion of such cases for the whole province was 11.1, against 11.3 in 1874 and 11.9 in 1873. In Sarun the laxness of practice which was animadverted on last year has been reformed. In Pooree, however, the results of the past year are altogether out of proportion to those of the previous year, the percentage of cases not inquired into having risen from 1.2 in 1874 to 44.1 in 1875. The proposal made by the Inspector-General that, with a view to secure uniformity of practice, it should be laid down as a rule that attempts merely should not be inquired into, does not commend itself to the Lieutenant-Governor. The recognition of such a principle might very possibly lead, without necessarily any collusion on the part of the police, to the concealment of crime which would be reported under the head of an attempt merely. The matter is one in

which the Lieutenant-Governor thinks that any hard-and-fast rule would be inadvisable, and that a discretion must be left in the hands of the local authorities.

Adding to the cognizable cases reported during the year those which occurred in previous years but brought under inquiry in 1875, the total number of cognizable cases to be accounted for was 122,361. Deducting false cases and those not inquired into, the balance of cases for trial was 82,867. Convictions were obtained in 32,270 cases, or 38·9 per cent., against 39·8 per cent. in 1874 and 38 per cent. in 1873. The total number of persons arrested during the year was 91,531. Of these 59·5 per cent. were convicted, against 60·2 per cent. in 1874 and 57·8 per cent. in 1873. The number of persons actually put on trial was 88,979. The percentage of such persons acquitted and convicted respectively during the past three years has been as follows:—

			1873.	1874.	1875.
Convicted	...	...	59·9	61·7	61·3
Acquitted	...	...	41·1	35	34

The following table shows the percentage of convictions obtained as regards each class of cognizable crime during the past two years:—

Class			Percentage of cases in which conviction was obtained in cases decided.		Percentage of persons convicted to persons arrested.		Percentage of persons convicted to persons brought to trial.	
			1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.
I	...	...	61·4	56·6	57·8	58·9	59·3	61·4
II	...	...	50·3	48·5	46·3	49·4	47·5	44·7
III	...	...	38·1	30·3	46·1	42·2	51·3	40·6
IV	...	...	39·8	39·3	49·6	51·4	51·3	53·6
V	...	...	54·1	48·3	54·7	50·3	58·5	54·3
VI	...	...	84	66·1	84·9	85·5	84·7	86·3
VII	...	...	80·1	92·3	91·6	89·0	92·3	89·3
Total			58·2	56·3	58·4	57·7	61·7	61·3

From the above it is shown that the proportion of persons convicted to persons brought to trial was unfavourable in cases coming under classes II and III, i.e. as regards the more serious offences against person and property. The results are still more unfavourable under these heads if persons arrested, and not persons brought to trial, are taken as the standard for comparison. On the other hand, it is apparent that, as compared with 1874, there has been some improvement during the past year in classes I, IV, and VI. It appears that the districts where results have been most unfavourable are Beerbhoom, Moorshedabad, Cuttack, Backergunge, Burdwan, and Rungpore, all districts in which the results were also unsatisfactory in the previous year. The districts which are mentioned by Mr. Hankey as continuing to show good results are Howrah, Singbhoom, Darjeeling, Dinagapore, and 24-Pergunnahs.

Mr. Hankey draws attention, and with apparent reason, to the unfavourable manner in which the Bengal police returns contrast in

certain particulars with those of other provinces. The following results deserve attention :—

	Bengal.	Central Provinces.	Oudh.	Punjab.
Number of cases investigated	88,963	25,453	39,806	44,439
Ditto in which conviction was obtained ..	32,270	13,008	.....	36,923
Number of persons arrested	94,461	23,770	31,723	51,211
Ditto brought to trial	88,979	20,167	31,054	41,703
Percentage of cases convicted to cases decided ..	56.0	93.0	77.63	93.0
Ditto of persons convicted to persons arrested	57.7	76.0	70.14	75.0
Ditto ditto ditto brought to trial	61.2	90	71.73	91

In view of the very marked difference in the percentages of cases successfully dealt with in Bengal, as compared with the other provinces mentioned in the above table, it is impossible not to suspect that there is some difference either in the manner in which complaints of certain classes are dealt with, or in the instructions issued as to the method of preparing the returns in the several provinces. The Lieutenant-Governor has separately requested the Inspector-General to place himself in communication with the police authorities of the provinces noted with a view to ascertaining definitely whether there are any such considerations to be allowed for previous to drawing deductions from the figures. Taking them as they stand, they certainly show some weak points in the administration of criminal justice in Bengal; for, as Mr. Hankey remarks, they indicate either that arrests are inconsiderately and injudiciously made, or else that offenders are improperly acquitted. On the other hand it might be said that, owing to the advance in education in the Lower Provinces of Bengal, the people are more alive to their rights and better able to maintain them. Some part of the result may also be due, as suggested by Mr. Hankey, to the acquisition of forensic skill among the upper and middle classes of society.

But to whatever cause the difference in the results in Lower Bengal, as compared with other provinces, may be attributable, the larger proportion of presumably innocent persons who are year after year arrested by the police is a matter for grave consideration and regret. Though some improvement in this respect is apparent, if the figures of former years are examined the present proportion of arrests to convictions must still be held to be unduly large. Sir Richard Temple has previously noticed this fault, and he has now positively insisted on such measures being taken immediately by the Magistracy and the Police Department as shall ensure a remedy being applied. He has always considered that the making of arrests on insufficient grounds is one of the worst failings of the police, and that the unfavourable estimation in which the Police Department is held among some sections of the native community is perhaps more owing to their proceedings in this

particular than to any other cause. These unnecessary arrests are chiefly attributable to ignorance, and improvement can only be looked for as the police become better educated and instructed, and are made to understand more clearly their duties and responsibilities. There is much to be done in this respect. If errors of procedure are always carefully pointed out by all District Magistrates and Superintendents of Police, and if proper notice is taken of all instances in which the police exceed their powers, the Lieutenant-Governor is confident that future returns will show a far smaller proportion of arrests to convictions. He has warned every Magistrate and every District Superintendent that in each district from time to time the returns will be jealously scrutinised with this view.

The large number of persons acquitted by the Sessions Courts is again very noticeable, and prominent attention has been drawn to the matter by the Inspector-General.

For the past three years the percentages of acquittals to persons tried has gradually increased, and has amounted to 43, 45 and 47 per cent. in each year. The results have been most unfavourable in the Pooree, Patna, Noakholly, Hooghly, Burdwan, and Bankoora districts, while the results were very successful in the Manbhoom, Purneah, Chittagong, Rajshahye, Pubna, and Furreedpore districts. The Inspector-General now specially points out the unfavourable results of sessions trials where juries are empannelled. He thinks that the suitability of the jury system for certain districts where it has been introduced has been brought into grave question. It is to be observed, however, that it does not necessarily follow that because a case is thrown out by a jury the jury are wrong; nor even should it so happen that this frequently occurs. The case may have been improperly committed, or the commitments may have been badly made. The whole question is one, however, which will receive separate consideration in the Judicial Department.

One of the accepted tests of the efficiency of a police, though often a very fallacious one, is the proportion borne by the value of the stolen property recovered by them to that which has been lost. The amount so recovered in 1875 was Rs. 2,98,907, against Rs. 9,25,681 stolen. The ratio of recovery was thus 32.3 per cent., or slightly better than in 1874, when it was 32 per cent., and considerably better than in 1873, when it was only 25.1 per cent. The districts where results have been conspicuously unfavourable are Dacca, where the ratio of recovery was only 9 per cent., and Bankoora, where it was only 5 per cent. In the 24 Pergunnahs, Howrah, Durbhunga, and Balasore the ratio of success has been very much above the average.

The number of offences reported and recorded in this class during the past year was 3,538. Of these 2,755 were accepted as true, or more by 149 than in the previous year, and less by 174 than in 1873. The chief offences under this head, and the only ones calling for remark, are those of rioting and unlawful assembly. The number of true cases appearing under these heads was 2,044, against 1,810 in 1874 and 2,108 in 1873. That a very undue proportion of these offences

continues to be contributed by the districts of the Dacca Division is shewn by the following table :—

DISTRICTS.	True cases.		Cases detected.		Persons convicted.	
	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.
Dacca	181	120	59	57	333	356
Furzedpore	119	151	61	65	261	310
Backergunge	171	178	66	81	276	323
Mymensingh	90	102	24	26	173	183
Tipperah	104	128	75	73	461	506
Total	615	679	253	302	1,503	1,678

In Mymensingh, although more than half the complaints made were eliminated as false, convictions were obtained in little more than one-fourth of the remainder. In Backergunge, with a little increase in the crime and a large decrease in the number of cases struck off as false, there was a great improvement in the number of cases detected. In Tipperah the comparative proportion borne by the large number of persons convicted to true cases is very noteworthy. Outside of the Dacca Division the districts where riots appear to be most frequent is Jessore, where the true cases in 1875 were 137, against 143 in 1874. In Nuddea the number of true cases increased, as compared with the previous year, from 83 to 103; in Pubna from 51 to 98. The two former districts are mentioned by the Inspector-General among those where the results of prosecutions have been satisfactory. In Bankoora, Beerbhoom, Cuttack, and Dinagopore they appear, as pointed out by him, to have been eminently unsatisfactory. From the general tenor of the Inspector-General's remarks respecting the comparative prevalence of rioting in the districts of the several Commissioners' Divisions, it is to be inferred that there has been a marked decrease in the number of serious cases, such as even in recent times were of frequent occurrence. The difficulty of obtaining convictions in cases of rioting, owing to the usual conflict of evidence, is an undoubted evil; for, as is observed by the Magistrate of Mozufferpore, every instance in which there is a failure of justice materially diminishes fear of the law. The Lieutenant-Governor, however, apprehends that but few cases of rioting occur where the matter in dispute has not been for some time agitated. A Magistrate who keeps himself acquainted with what is going on in his district should have speedy information of such matters, and be able to interfere before the mischief happens. Where the inhabitants of any village are habitually turbulent, the good results to be obtained by quartering extra police on them have been amply proved by experience; and the Lieutenant-Governor doubts, as already noticed, whether Magistrates take sufficient advantage of the provisions of the law on this subject.

Under this class the offences recorded during the past year amounted to 4,184, against 3,905 in 1874 and 4,392 in 1873. The number of persons convicted of such offences amounted to 3,004, against 2,987 in 1874 and 3,245 in 1873. As may be observed from the

Serious offences against the person.

table given above, the percentages showing the result of the action of the police in regard to crimes of the class indicate that there has been some want of success in dealing with them as compared with the previous year. The details as regards the chief heads of crime in this class are as follows :—

CRIME.	True cases.		Cases detected.		Persons convicted.	
	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.
Murder	203	302	125	121	231	243
Culpable homicide	195	216	91	108	148	220
Causing death by rash actions	57	75	43	59	50	75
Rape	215	231	30	48	68	73
Unnatural offence	39	41	11	9	15	10
Administering stupefying drugs	24	29	7	7	13	8
Grievous hurt to cause confession, &c. ...	4	6	...	2	...	2
Hurt to cause confession, &c.	28	34	8	6	30	28
Kidnapping and abduction	186	216	55	71	116	123

While the number of cases of murder accepted as true was precisely the same as in the previous year, there was a slight falling off in the number of cases in which convictions were obtained. At the same time the number of cases rejected as false was 77 only, against 85 in the previous year; while, as in the previous year, every third case of culpable homicide reported was struck off as false. There was an excess of 21 in the residuum of true cases in 1875 as compared with 1874. There was at the same time an increase of 18 in the number of true cases of causing death by a rash or negligent act. How many cases of causing death are included in the cases reported under the head of hurt or grievous hurt has not been stated. This information should be given in future.

In murder cases, with a somewhat smaller number of cases detected, the number of convictions obtained was slightly in excess of the figure for the previous year. Still this figure shows a lamentable want of success in tracing out offenders, or in establishing their guilt. In the Behar districts 34 persons only were convicted out of 240 arrested. In Orissa 4 only out of 24. Taking these provinces as a whole, it appears that but one person out of every four charged with murder was convicted. The general percentage would have been much worse but for the comparatively successful results of trials in the Chota Nagpore Division. A most satisfactory feature is the rapid decrease since 1872 in the number of murders committed by dacoits. In the past year there were but two cases of this kind, and in both convictions were obtained. As

regards murders by robbers, convictions were obtained in eight cases out of 18, against seven out of 19 in the previous year. One such case occurred in each of the districts of Beerbhoom, Dinagepore, Rajshahye, Bogra, Backergunge, and Furreedpore, with the result of a conviction on each. In other districts the results were less favourable, notably Burdwan and Dacca. As regards cases of murder by poison, of which there were 12 accepted as true in the past year, there is nothing noticeable except the want of success in dealing with the crime in the north-eastern districts of the Rajshahye Division, and the fact that of six cases reported in Backergunge five were reported to be false. As regards other murders, there is the common, though most sad, tale of wives murdered by their husbands, and of husbands murdered by their wives or their wives' paramours. It is satisfactory to notice the large decrease of men killed in land disputes or other riots, as already referred to, and of children killed for their ornaments.

In connection with the increase noticed above in the number of cases of culpable homicide, the marked want of success in the matter of obtaining convictions in the Burdwan, Chittagong, and Patna Divisions forms a just subject for observation. The fact that in the Chota Nagpore Division, with 24 true cases, convictions were obtained in 20, may be in part due to the simple nature of the people in the jungle districts. They are easily excited to passion, and not unfrequently acknowledge crimes committed under its influence. As is usual, one-half of the charges of rape made in the course of the year were decided to be false. Such charges are doubtless easily brought and substantiated with difficulty. Of three persons tried, if one is convicted the result is considered good. Judged by this standard, the results obtained in the Dacca, Presidency, and Chota Nagpore Divisions were better than usual. The Lieutenant-Governor observes with regret that a system of what has been called gang rape is reported to exist. Backergunge is the district where the crime in this form has been specially noticed. The comparative impunity with which the crime of drugging continues to be practised is discouraging. In the Patna Division convictions were obtained in 2 cases only, against 12 reported, and in the Dacca Division in one only, against six reported. The same number of cases of grievous hurt for the purpose of extorting confessions were reported in the past as in the previous year; but in 1875 all six cases reported were accepted as true, against 4 only in 1874. Although convictions were obtained in two cases, as against no convictions in the previous year, it is a lamentable result that the crime should have gone wholly unpunished in Howrah, Malda, Rungpore, and Purneah, in each of which districts one case occurred. Since the close of the year under report the Mahomedan Marriage Registration Act has been introduced into most of the districts of Eastern Bengal. The Lieutenant-Governor will await with interest reports showing what effect this measure has had in reducing the number of complaints of kidnapping and abduction. At present about one-half of such complaints are rejected as false, while barely one-third of the remainder are proved to conviction—a fact which has long been indicative of a defect in the law.

The total number of true cases recorded in this class during the past year was 23,957, or less by 4,658 in the previous year, and by 574 in 1873. Omitting cases of burglary, which it will be convenient to consider separately, the results under the chief heads were as follows:—

CRIME.	True cases.		Cases detected.		Persons convicted.	
	1874	1875.	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875
Dacoity	421	236	141	71	756	347
Robbery	255	171	81	60	171	106
Serious mischief . . .	1,250	1,098	344	300	605	498

The remarkable decrease in the number of cases of dacoity observable from the above figures is, the Lieutenant-Governor thinks, the most favourable feature in the report for the year. Not only was there a decrease of 45 per cent. in the number of true cases, but at the same time the number of false cases was 99 only, against 160 in the previous year. The proportion borne by cases detected and persons convicted to cases accepted as true was not quite up to the standard of 1874; but on the whole the Lieutenant-Governor is prepared to look upon the results obtained as satisfactory except in Burdwan, where one case only was prosecuted to conviction against seven which were reported and accepted as true; in Dinagapore, where similarly there was only one case as against 18; in Dacca, where with 12 true cases none were detected; and in Manbhoom, where two only were detected out of 15. In Midnapore the 'figure test is admittedly unfavourable. The number of dacoities has increased from 17 in 1874 to 26 in 1875, while convictions were obtained in only 7 cases, against 15 in the previous year. It is explained, however, that the arrangements made by Mr. Macaulay, c.s., for detecting this crime while he was Superintendent of Police in the district in 1874 are working admirably and have been productive of the best results, which will be more apparent in the report for the current year. The districts mentioned last year as those in which the crime of dacoity was specially prevalent were Beerbhoom, Moorshedabad, and Julpigoree. In each and all of them the diminution in the number of cases reported has been very satisfactory. It is not satisfactory, however, that in the district last named, with ten true cases in the past year, not a single one should have been prosecuted to conviction. In Moorshedabad and Beerbhoom the crime has been more successfully dealt with, but there also the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the local officers will perceive that there is much room for improvement. The district, however, in which the most marked improvement is observable is Purneah. There the number of cases reported in 1874 was 42, of which 30 were accepted as true, and the number of persons convicted was 34. In the past year the number of cases reported was 7, of which three only were accepted as true, and the number of dacoits convicted was 13. The measures, says Mr. Hankey, which have led to this very satisfactory result are as follows:—First, the determined and energetic

action of the Magistrate of the district against the bad characters and suspected persons of the district; secondly the apprehension and conviction of two of the most notable dacoits who had long escaped with impunity, and the conviction of an influential and well-connected Brahmin who had long been suspected of being a receiver of stolen property, and was at last detected in the attempt to organize a dacoity; thirdly, the encouragement given to villagers to protect themselves against dacoits. Two of the three cases recorded in the past year, it appears, were attempts only; the villagers, on the advent of the dacoits, having turned out and put them to flight. In Pubna and Bogra the results of police action in dacoity cases have been favourable. In the former district the good effects resulting from the punishment of four receivers of stolen property are mentioned. In Mozufferpore the assistance derived from certain ghât tiocadars in the matter of arresting dacoits is prominently acknowledged. In the 24-Pergunnahs, Jessore, Tipperah, and Backergunge districts also the results were satisfactory. There is nothing calling for remark as regards the cases of robbery and serious mischief recorded, except the satisfactory decrease in the number under each head.

Taking together the heads of crime which comprise the offence of burglary, as understood by the Inspector-General of Police, we have the following results:—

CRIME.	True cases.		Cases detected.		Persons convicted.	
	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.
Heading No. 35	26,327	21,899	1,847	1,294	2,742	1,942
Do. " 30	278	286	96	130	146	222
Do. " 42	1,029	1,563	237	241	299	300
Total ..	28,234	23,748	2,182	1,665	3,187	2,464

While there was a satisfactory decrease in the number of cases which occurred, there was no improvement in the matter of detection. Mr. Hankey, in extenuation of these results, calls attention to the fact that it is not in Bengal alone that the police fail to deal effectually with this crime. On the other hand, the nature of the houses in which the people live in Bengal, and the luxuriance of the vegetable growth around every homestead, afford great facilities for the crime and a ready means of escape to the thieves. The Lieutenant-Governor hopes that one of the first fruits of the improved position which the village police will hold under the operations of the Chowkedaree Act will be the reduction of crimes of this nature.

The number of true cases recorded in this class was 9,862 in the past year, compared with 6,495 in 1874 and 3,508 in the previous year. This rapid increase in crime is to a great extent apparent only. It was not till after the commencement of 1874 that hurt was made a cognizable offence, and the fact that in the past year 6,861 cases of this kind are included in the total of 9,862 shown sufficiently accounts for the difference. As regards other offences under this head, there is a very

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marked decrease in cases of wrongful confinement and restraint in the Pubna district, where some success was obtained in dealing with a very bad case of the kind.

Under this class there was a decrease of 5,250 true cases as compared with 1874, and of 2,174 true cases as compared with 1873. Out of 38,093, the total number of offences recorded in this class, 1,563 have been included above among burglaries. The remaining chief heads of crime are as follows :—

CRIME.	True cases.		Cases detected.		Persons convicted.	
	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.	1874.	1875.
Cattle theft	2,795	1,999	1,460	950	2,194	1,455
Ordinary theft	28,434	24,460	10,117	7,348	15,079	10,989
Criminal breach of trust	1,801	1,628	395	298	547	475
Receiving stolen property	2,776	2,277	2,179	1,733	3,796	2,789

In 1874 the enormous number of 12,957 cases of theft of all kinds were rejected as false; in the past year the number was only slightly less, being 12,235. At the same time there was a diminution of 5,502 in the total number of complaints lodged. The net result has been a decrease of 4,780 in the number of true cases. As may be observed from the figures given in the table above, there has been a marked falling off in the number of cases successfully investigated, and in the number of convictions obtained under each of the heads of crime. Cattle theft is said to have increased in the Chittagong Division, and to have decreased in the Chota Nagpore and Bhagulpore Divisions. It continues to be very prevalent in the districts of the Patna Division, especially in Mozufferpore and Durbhunga. In the grazing lands of the Bhagulpore Division, which lie contiguous to the latter district, and between it and the district of Dinagepore, cattle theft has decreased. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the stricter watch to which this result is said to be attributable in Purneah will be extended also to the other parts of this tract of country.

The figures showing the number of cases during the past three years which have been entered under this head with their results are as follows :—

	1873.	1874.	1875.
Cases	13,304	13,272	15,206
Number detected	10,869	10,968	12,582
Persons punished	13,438	13,775	16,501

The increase shown by the above figures is due to an increased number of vagrancy, excise, and nuisance cases. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe the increase in the number of prosecutions for vagrancy and bad livelihood, as indicating that more general effect has been given to the instructions which have been so frequently issued on the subject. During the past year the number of prosecutions under this head increased from 2,459 to 3,387, and 2,480 persons

were convicted as against 1,667 in 1874. In seven districts mentioned by the Inspector-General but little action appears to have been taken against bad characters, but it is satisfactory to notice the energetic measures which have been apparently adopted in Manbhoom, Rungpore, Mozufferpore, Jessore, Chumparun, Monghyr, and Purneah.

The total number of non-cognizable cases instituted by complaint during the year or taken up by the Magistrates of their own motion was 95,766, or 1,541 in excess of the number in 1874. The number of cases in which process issued was 70,637, against 70,881. These figures are considerably less than those for 1873—a result due to the transfer of cases of simple hurt from the non-cognizable to the cognizable list. The number of persons convicted during the past year was 42,708, or 777 more than in 1874, although the number of persons who actually appeared in court was 73,471, or 2,058 less than in 1874. These results are not unsatisfactory. In forming an opinion on the subject, it is important to bear in mind that petty cases, when true, are not unusually compromised out of court.

The number of non-cognizable cases in which the police were required to make an inquiry was 5,569 only, against 6,997 in 1874. This is a marked improvement. With reference to an order passed by the late Commissioner of the Burdwan Division, now Commissioner of the Presidency Division, requiring the submission to him of a special report in all cases where a police inquiry is ordered in non-cognizable cases, Mr. Hankey remarks on the danger of proceeding too far in a contrary direction. In his remarks generally the Lieutenant-Governor concurs. At the same time he would observe that the control to be exercised by a Commissioner in such a matter would depend very much upon the acquaintance he possessed of the officers serving under him, and the amount of confidence he placed in their discretion. As was observed in last year's report, it is essential, with reference to financial considerations, that the police force should be utilised to the fullest extent for its more legitimate duties, and should as far as possible be relieved from miscellaneous work. In this view the Lieutenant-Governor is not prepared to interfere with the action taken to secure these ends. The ratio of convictions to persons tried in non-cognizable cases is highest (80 per cent.) in the district of Howrah, where the number of municipal cases is very large. It is also good in Dinagapore (71 per cent.), Pubna (66 per cent.), Gya (65 per cent.), Purneah (63 per cent.), Maldah (62 per cent.), Patna (61 per cent.), Jessore, Pooree, and Backergunge (60 per cent.), and in the districts of the Chota Nagpore Division.

In reviewing generally at the close of his report the conduct of the police during the past year, Mr. Hankey, the Inspector-General, remarks as follows:—"On the whole, I think the police are fairly entitled to a good modicum of praise. The verdict of the local officers is decidedly favourable, and, judging from the paucity of complaints that find expression in the public press, the general public are tolerably satisfied with these guardians. The police is nowhere a very popular department, and usually comes in for more than its fair share of stricture. Complaints will of course arise, and it is right and proper that, when made with justice, they should be made public and opportunity of

investigating them afforded. *Per contra*, however, I frequently receive native petitions praying for the retention of some outpost on the ground of immunity from crime and the general security it has afforded to the inhabitants." In these remarks, based as they are on the opinions of the several Commissioners of Divisions, the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to be able to concur generally. He observes, from the abstract given of the remarks made by local officers, that a few districts excepted, where circumstances are against the police, the force is said to be efficient and well behaved. Sir Richard Temple has already recorded his opinion that to a very large extent the character and efficiency of the police depend on the zeal, discretion, and ability of those placed in authority over them; and where a Magistrate and a District Superintendent have been long enough in a district to make their mark on the administration, the Lieutenant-Governor will not fail to hold them responsible for results.

The Lieutenant-Governor has but little to add to the observations he placed on record in last year's report regarding the condition and efficiency of the Bengal police. Although progress is apparent, there is still room for much more rapid and considerable improvement. The most important agents of the police administration are the petty officers of the force, the head constables and sub-inspectors, by whom all criminal investigations are ordinarily held; and it is amongst this class of officers that there is the widest scope for improvement. The attention of Government has long been devoted to considering the means whereby the status of head constables especially may be ameliorated, and it is a matter of regret that financial necessities have hitherto rendered it impossible to give effect to any of the proposals that have been made. The Government is fully aware that this is the most urgent need of the department, and that the only certain means of securing a higher order of efficiency is by raising the status and salary of the petty police-officers. It is feared that until this can be done the undeniable unpopularity and venality of the police must continue. Much, however, may be done in the direction of improvement by the inspectors and District Superintendents of Police, and the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to be able to say that owing to the exertions of the superior police officials, both European and Native, the results of the past year's administration do show that upon the whole crime has been creditably repressed and offenders brought to justice. It may be added that the gradual introduction of the new Chowkidaree Act, which is now in force in portions at least of most of the districts in Bengal, has established the village watch as a more valuable auxiliary to the district police administration than was formerly the case. The extension generally throughout Bengal of the provisions of the Village Chowkidaree Act, of the Criminal Tribes' Act, of the Mahomedan Marriage Registration Act, and of the Reformatory Schools' Act, will, in many matters of criminal administration, mark as it were a new era. The Lieutenant-Governor entertains a confident hope that through the operation of these provisions the hands of the local executive will be much strengthened, and that ere long the beneficial results will be shown by a large diminution of offences recorded under certain heads of crime.

Criminal Justice.

WHEN the new Code of Criminal Procedure, which provided for the summary trial of petty cases by magisterial officers, was introduced in 1872, the Government was not without some apprehension that while the system of summary trial would be undoubtedly attended with many advantages, it was still liable to chance of partial failure if not well guarded, and might possibly in some cases result in trials being held in a hurried and imperfect manner. The Government, therefore, in introducing the system, deemed it necessary to proceed with care and caution, and those officers only who were shown to be of proved experience and judgment were vested with the power of holding summary trials. It was also arranged that summary trials should be held by certain benches of Honorary Magistrates, presided over by salaried Magistrates, as it was deemed that such a course would be calculated to win the public confidence. At the same time the District Magistrates were required to exercise a careful supervision over the proceedings of their subordinates, and to bring to notice all instances in which the powers of summary trial were indiscreetly exercised. Similarly, the Commissioners of Divisions were required to examine when on tour the files of each court, and to submit periodical reports on the manner in which the powers conferred on the several officers within their respective jurisdictions had been exercised.

These precautions, with reference both to the investing of officers with the power of holding summary trials, and the supervision to be exercised over their proceedings, have since been strictly adhered to. But few instances have been brought to notice in which the powers accorded have not been exercised with care and discretion, and the reports which have been received from time to time from the District Magistrates and the Commissioners of Divisions have shown that the summary provisions of the law have been worked successfully; that the proceedings of all officers have been carefully watched; that there has been a marked absence of any complaints; and that the system has resulted in the greatest possible convenience to the public as well as to judicial officers. The people have had their complaints disposed of rapidly and without involving the necessity of irksome and prolonged attendance at the courts; and judicial officers have been enabled to devote more of their time to duties of greater importance than the disposal of petty criminal charges. In short, it has been shown by these reports that the disfavour and apprehension with which the measure was at one time regarded by some important classes of the

community, when the summary procedure was first introduced, have no longer any shadow of foundation, and that the benefits of the system are now generally admitted.

The total number of cases disposed of summarily during the first-half of the year 1876 was 10,279, and convictions were obtained in 7,485 cases, of which, with reference to the sentences passed, 1,532 cases were appealable and 5,953 cases were not appealable. Notwithstanding the large number of cases disposed of, the total number of cases in which appeals were filed, or in which the proceedings were called for by the superior courts for purposes of revision, was 145 only. This result, even considering that the cases disposed of were for the most part of a petty nature, cannot but be looked upon as very satisfactory. It is still more satisfactory to observe that on appeal and revision the decisions of the lower courts were reversed in 17 and modified in 14 cases only. This result the Lieutenant-Governor considers to be eminently creditable to the discretion and judgment with which the large and very responsible powers vested in the several Magistrates and Benches of holding summary trials have been exercised.

Again, it is very creditable to the proceedings of the Magistrates to notice the large proportion of persons convicted to acquitted, and that although the total number of persons tried summarily during the first-half of the current year was so large as 15,091, of whom 10,562 were convicted, 22 persons only were released or acquitted on appeal, or on revision of the proceedings of the lower courts.

The Lieutenant-Governor is also glad to notice that 3,312 cases, or about one-third of the whole number, were disposed of by Honorary Magistrates sitting with salaried Magistrates. Although the work performed by the Benches during the period in question is still small, it is far in excess of what has been reported to have been done by them in previous years; and the figures given in the statement also show that the Bench of Magistrates have exercised the special powers entrusted to them with the greatest care and discretion. Out of a total number of 2,164 cases tried by them, in which convictions were obtained, the decisions in five cases only were reversed or modified; and of 2,718 persons convicted, four only were acquitted or released on appeal, or revision of the sentence passed.

The Bench system has now been fairly organized and brought into working order in each district, and the Lieutenant-Governor hopes that future returns will show that a far larger proportion of the summary trials have been held by Benches of Magistrates. The method of trial by Benches has already proved a success, and has met with the general approval and confidence of the native public. Although, owing to the various difficulties which have arisen, there has been some delay in the general extension of the system, 128 separate Benches have now been established, and there has been a gradual and marked improvement in the outturn of work performed by them. For the most part the Benches now sit regularly and perform a fair share of the work in each district. During the first-half of the past

year 2,594 cases of all kinds were disposed of by Benches of Magistrates, in the second-half of that year 4,745 cases were disposed of, while in the first-half of the current year the number has risen to 6,426. In the Lieutenant-Governor's judgment it would be hard to over-estimate the moral importance of native gentlemen, whether belonging to the landholding, the commercial, or the professional classes, or living on fixed incomes of any sort, undertaking magisterial functions more and more—functions which they ought to be pre-eminently qualified to discharge to the satisfaction of their countrymen. He is confident that the native gentry of Bengal will be brought to regard the matter in this light. The Lieutenant-Governor has every confidence that the several Magistrates and Benches of Magistrates who have been entrusted with the powers of summary trial will continue to exercise these powers with the marked degree of judgment and discretion which has hitherto generally characterised their proceedings.

Nothing has occurred during the year under review to induce the Lieutenant-Governor to modify the opinion expressed in last year's Administration Report as to the good effect of the system of charging process fees in noncognizable cases. In repressing false and frivolous complaints, and in making parties produce their own witnesses, when this is possible, without the issue of process at all. The relief to the police has been great, and process being more speedily served, the early disposal of cases has been much facilitated.

It may be said that the general administration of criminal justice, both as evinced by the statistical returns and by the general testimony in its favour as compared with former times, shows satisfactory results. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to reproduce on this subject the remarks of a Collector of ability and wide experience. Sir William Herschel writes:—"The great increase in respect for personal rights, the immense improvement in the personal behaviour of the police, especially in municipalities, the astonishing change in the style of evidence given in courts, the comparatively truthful, fearless, and untutored bearing of the common rustic when put on his affirmation, the disuse of false defences under a system of wholesome cross-examination of the prosecution, the large decrease in cases wholly artificial, the development of individual activity in the protection of public rights, the enlarged familiarity with the machinery of our judicial administration which the people show,—all these things, but most signally the hopeful change in the character of the evidence laid before the court, afford me the strongest assurance that the system we are pursuing is radically affecting the character of the people in favour of truthfulness and right-minded self respect." These remarks the Lieutenant-Governor believes reflect the opinion of officers in all parts of the Bengal province.

In the police chapter of this report it will be found that a full account has been given of the criminal administration during the year. It will only be necessary in this chapter to make such general observations regarding the punishments for offences as may be necessary to supplement the subject.

As compared with the year 1874, the districts of Burdwan, Midnapore, Nuddea, Noakholly, and Manbhoom, showed a considerable increase in the number of convictions that were followed by imprisonment.

The decrease of such convictions, on the other hand, was most remarkable in Beerbhoom, Dinagepore, Julpigoree, the districts of the Bhagulpore Division, and those of the Patna Division south of the Ganges. In the districts of the latter Division north of the Ganges the number of imprisonments on conviction was much the same as in the previous year. As compared with the average of the four years from 1870 to 1873, nearly every district shows an increase, the only districts in which such imprisonments have fallen off to any great extent being Bankoora, Backergunge, Bhagulpore, and Singbhoom. The total number of females imprisoned after conviction during the year was 2,109, against 2,263 in 1874. This is equivalent to 1 in every 14,332 of the female population.

It seems unnecessary to give again the number of convicts of each caste amongst Hindus. It will suffice to mention that the caste of which the largest proportionate number was in jail was the Ahir caste, the ratio being 8·3 per cent. Of Sudras, without further specification of caste, 3·2 per cent. were in jail; of Nats, 4 per cent.; of Domes, 1·9; of Mehters, 1·7; of Chetrees, 1·6 per cent. Of no other single caste were as many as 1 per cent. in prison during the year.

Of the total number in jail during the year, 516 males and 52 females were under 16 years of age; 36,180 males and 1,761 females between 16 and 40; 8,771 males and 426 females between 40 and 60; and 3,023 males and 164 females over 60.

The following table shows the ages of those convicts who were admitted during the year:—

PRISONERS ADMITTED DURING 1875.	Male.	Female.	Total.	Proportion of females to total per thousand.
Under 12 years of age	56	8	64	125
12 and not exceeding 16 years	311	38	349	108
16 ditto ditto 20 „	1,544	143	1,687	84
20 ditto ditto 30 „	10,904	668	11,572	57
30 ditto ditto 40 „	10,029	455	10,484	43
40 ditto ditto 50 „	4,296	228	4,524	50
50 ditto ditto 60 „	1,979	128	2,107	60
Above 60 years of age	653	21	674	31
Total ...	29,772	1,689	31,461	53

Of the boys under 12 years of age, 21 were admitted into the Presidency Jail, 4 into the Dacca Jail, and 3 each into the jails at Burdwan, Alipore, Mozufferpore, and Purneah. Of boys between 12 and 16, 56 were admitted into the Presidency Jail, 41 into the Alipore Jail, 23 at Meemapore (Patna), 18 at Mozufferpore, 16 at Dacca, 14 at Midnapore, and 13 at Noakholly. In no other jail did the number exceed 10.

The Presidency and Alipore jails have an arrangement by which juveniles are transferred to the former and adolescents to the latter for incarceration, and such an arrangement is no doubt conducive to the better observance of a suitable penal discipline for these respective classes.

The Reformatory Schools' Act (V of 1876) was passed during the last cold weather, and the Lieutenant-Governor has lately sanctioned the establishment of a juvenile reformatory in the premises now occupied as the Alipore Jail hospital.

The total number of convicts who had been previously convicted, it will be seen, was 6,220, or 12·22 per cent. of the whole. Of this number 3,783 had been convicted once before, 967 twice, and 1,470 more than twice. Of the total of 413 juvenile prisoners under 16 years of age, 63, or over 15 per cent., had been previously convicted. In 1872 the number of re-convictions was returned as 1,377; in 1873 it was 1,695; in 1874 it was 2,757; and in 1875 it was 3,075. In other words, the re-convictions have apparently increased in the short space of four years by no less than 123 per cent.

The total number of persons sentenced to whipping was—

			For first offence.	For second and subsequent offences.	Total.
1872	...	...	3,163	387	3,550
1873	.	..	3,430	450	3,880
1874	...	..	5,921	581	6,502
1875	...	...	3,169	496	3,665

Of the 3,169 whipped for their first offence, 3,114 were convicted of theft, the dishonest receipt of stolen property, or criminal trespass; and of the 496 whipped for a second or subsequent offence, all except two were convicted of those offences. In 109 cases the number of stripes awarded was less than 5, in 564 cases the number was under 10, in 875 under 15, in 866 under 20, in 553 under 25, and in 698 under 30. The number of stripes awarded was naturally greater in the case of re-convictions, three-fifths of such cases receiving 20 stripes and upwards. Sentences of whipping were inflicted on 330 persons under 16 years of age and on 51 persons over 50. Imprisonment in addition to corporal punishment was awarded in 539 cases, of which 376 were for second or subsequent offences.

Of the 3,665 persons flogged, 36 only were able to read and write.

Daily average number of prisoners.				1875.	1874	Increase or decrease.
Civil	{ Jails	...	...	117	127	10 D
		...	...	7	5	2 I
	Total		...	124	132	8 D
Under-trial	{ Jails	...	...	*780	919†	139 D
		...	...	499	638	139 D
	Total		...	1,279	1,557	278 D
Convicted	{ Jails	...	...	†19,563	19,547	16 I
		...	...	415	465	50 D
	Total		...	19,978	20,012	34 D
Total	{ Jails	...	...	20,160	20,593	133 D
		...	...	921	1,108	187 D
	Total		...	21,381	21,701	320 D

CRIME IN CALCUTTA AND SUBURBS.

The administration of the police in the town and suburbs of Calcutta during the year 1875 was fairly successful. Although the total number of offences reported exceeded that of the previous year by 114 cases, this increase is shown to have occurred in offences of a petty character under local and special laws, while, as regards serious crime, punishable under the Penal Code and cognizable by the police, there was a large decrease of 983 offences. This decrease is specially marked under the head of offences affecting property, which, as well as offences against the person, were fewer than during the previous year. No extensive robbery took place by night either in the European or native quarter of the town throughout the year, nor was a single grave act of violence committed in the public streets. As compared with the previous year also there was a decrease of 1,413 in the number of persons summoned or arrested; and the percentage of persons convicted to those arrested shows that heinous offences were dealt with by the police with more than average success.

The following table exhibits the number of cognizable and non-cognizable offences reported in the town and suburbs during the past four years:—

		1872.	1873.	1874.	1875
Town	...	38,879	39,169	29,833	30,528
Suburbs	...	8,659	9,153	7,821	7,240
Total	...	47,538	48,322	37,654	37,768

The improvement which was observed in the statistics of 1874 has been sustained during the year under review.

* Including 50 50 hajut prisoners confined in the Magistrates' hajut.

† Ditto 35 ditto ditto.

‡ Ditto 2 convicted prisoners ditto ditto.

Distinguishing cognizable from noncognizable crime, and miscellaneous offences from offences punishable under the Penal Code, the comparative results of police action for the years 1874 and 1875 were as follows :—

	COGNIZABLE.		NONCOGNIZABLE.		Total.
	Penal Code.	Miscellaneous.	Penal Code.	Miscellaneous.	
Cases reported { 1874 ...	6,708	11,912	5,957	13,079	37,854
{ 1875 ...	5,723	13,365	6,085	12,595	37,768
Persons summoned or arrested { 1874 ...	6,418	15,619	6,467	9,810	38,343
{ 1875 ...	5,339	17,201	6,045	8,345	36,930
Persons convicted { 1874 ...	3,405	8,312	3,775	9,032	24,524
{ 1875 ...	2,085	8,448	4,314	7,345	22,792

As during the previous year, the proportion of persons convicted to those who appeared before the courts charged with noncognizable offences under miscellaneous Acts is favourable, and shows that good discretion was exercised in instituting prosecutions under those Acts. But the Lieutenant-Governor regrets to observe that the proportion of persons acquitted to those shown to have been arrested by the police in miscellaneous cognizable offences still continues to be very large, and is much in excess of the previous year. This is becoming a serious matter, regarding which the Lieutenant-Governor will presently make further remark.

The total number of cases and persons dealt with in the courts of the Police Magistrates of Calcutta, and the results, are abstracted in the following table :—

	Number of cases instituted.	Total number of persons put on trial.	Acquitted.	Convicted.	Committed.
Northern Division	5,729	7,451	1,501	5,821	105
Southern " 	8,071	7,616	662	6,953	82
Total	13,800	15,067	2,163	12,774	187

Comparing these figures with those of the previous year, they show an increase of 1,530 cases, which has chiefly occurred in the Southern Division, with an increase of 58 only in the number of persons brought to trial. The results also are more favourable, as 86 per cent. of the persons placed on trial were either convicted or committed, as against 83 per cent. in 1874.

In Calcutta serious offences, both against person and property, have fallen from 222 to 179; but there has been an increase in the total number of cognizable offences which were accepted as true, the number being 14,894 as against 13,561 in 1874. The case of trading in defaced Government stamps was one of considerable importance. Only one petty case of rioting was reported. Of offences against the person, 279 cases were

reported as against 281. There were three murders, against two in 1874 and seven in 1873. Convictions were obtained in two cases: in the third the difficulties in the way of detection were almost insuperable. Offences against property, on the other hand, decreased in number from 3,705 to 3,055. Burglaries and attempts at burglary show satisfactory decrease from 170 to 103. The action of the police also in these cases was successful, convictions having been obtained in 30 cases. There is perhaps no class of offence which in all countries presents such difficulties to successful detection as burglary; and the Lieutenant-Governor considers that the Calcutta police have shown creditable results both in the prevention and detection of this crime. Convictions were obtained in 32 per cent. of the theft cases reported, and property valued at Rs 35,410 was recovered out of a total value of Rs. 93,686 said to have been stolen. The Lieutenant-Governor concurs with the Commissioner in absolving the police from blame for failure to detect the majority of thefts by servants. The practice of hiring utter strangers as servants, and giving them access to the valuables of the house, is understood to be too prevalent in Calcutta, and the police cannot be held answerable for all the results which ensue. It is noticeable, however, that not a single theft of importance was reported to have occurred in houses occupied by Europeans.

Turning to the heading of miscellaneous cognizable offences, the Lieutenant-Governor observes that an increase of 1,453 cases has been attended by an increase of 136 only in the number of convictions obtained. This doubly unsatisfactory result is generally attributable to three causes—(1) the continuance of the practice of summary arrest by the police for miscellaneous offences in the streets; (2) the serious indiscretion evidenced by the results of the action of the police in arresting persons suspected of possessing stolen property; and (3) the very large number of persons arrested under the 'Contagious Diseases' Act who were subsequently discharged by the Deputy Commissioner. The first subject was prominently noticed in the report for 1874; and the Lieutenant-Governor must therefore express his dissatisfaction at the results, as the number of persons thus arrested has only decreased from 4,675 in 1874 to 4,184 in 1875, and of these no less than 1,135 were discharged without trial. The Lieutenant-Governor is willing to suppose that in most of these cases the commission of the offence was established, and that the offender was discharged with a warning by the Deputy Commissioner; but a short period of police custody and appearance before the Deputy Commissioner is not a recognized punishment under the law, and it is evident that a very large number of persons were needlessly arrested. The Lieutenant-Governor has recently had occasion to point out the danger of hardship to individuals which this tendency to indiscriminate arrest involves, and he must now insist on the observance of the rule laid down in the report for 1874, viz. that the police should be permitted to resort to arrest in these petty cases only in instances where the offence is committed in their view, and the name of the offender is unknown and cannot be ascertained. The great majority of these cases should therefore be entered under noncognizable crime in future reports. Of 563 persons arrested in the town with property suspected to be stolen, all were

subsequently discharged by the police. In no case, apparently, were sufficient grounds found to exist for placing any of the persons thus arrested before the Magistrate. These results are far from creditable to the police. They have not been explained by the Commissioner, but demand his immediate attention; for such a general and injudicious exercise of the powers of arrest must have been attended by much individual hardship to innocent persons, and is calculated to render the police an object of apprehension and distrust to the public. Again, of 4,954 persons arrested under the Contagious Diseases' Act, no less than 4,749 were discharged by the Deputy Commissioner. In reviewing the report on the working of this Act during the past year, the necessity which exists for more vigorous action in dealing with established offences against the law has been pointed out. The Lieutenant-Governor is confident that if flagrant offenders were more frequently prosecuted and punished by the Magistrates, there would be fewer offences and fewer occasions for arrest. Sir Richard Temple trusts that the Commissioner will be able to show a marked diminution of unnecessary arrests under each of the heads above noticed in the report of the current year.

The returns show a large and satisfactory decrease of crime in the suburbs, which is noticeable under each head except that of minor offences against the person. Cognizable crime.— In all, 2,845 cognizable cases only were accepted as true, against 3,179 in 1874; offences punishable under the Penal Code decreased from 1,685 to 1,259; while the number of persons convicted rose from 757 to 804. In burglary cases, however, the action of the police was far from successful. Only 26 cases were detected out of 120 reported, and only property of the value of Rs. 223 was recovered out of the total value of Rs. 4,777 reported to have been stolen. In theft cases the results were better, success attending the investigation of 314 out of 783 true cases. The result of the inquiry in the case of the theft of the jewels of His Highness the Maharajah of Travancore was particularly creditable, and the action of the inspector has already met with an appropriate reward under the orders of the Supreme Government. In the suburbs, as in the town, the statistics of miscellaneous cognizable crime again point to injudicious or ignorant action on the part of the police, more than half of the total number of persons arrested having been discharged without trial.

Reported crime under this denomination shows a decrease in the number of cases both in the town and in the suburbs. Noncognizable crime.

The Lieutenant-Governor observes with much concern that convictions under this Act rose from 247 in 1874 to 319 in 1875. The question of the survey of cargo vessels, which is intimately connected with this subject, and was referred to in the past year's report, is, it is understood, included in a measure now under the consideration of the imperial legislature. Shipping Act.

The Lieutenant-Governor accepts Sir Stuart Hogg's assurance that the rules in force under the Arms' Act have worked well, securing, on the one hand, complete control over all transactions connected with the trade in arms, and, on the other, the security of the public. Arms' Act.

the other, causing no inconvenience to such trade in its legitimate branches. The figures given show a moderate increase of all fire-arms as compared with 1874, but a large decrease as compared with the importations of the two previous years. There is considerable weight in the observations of the Commissioner regarding the seemingly imperfect guage which the inland transport figures give of the actual quantity of arms and ammunition imported into the provinces beyond the north-western frontier of Bengal.

It is satisfactory to note that no extensively destructive fire broke out during the year. It is observed that 11 out of the 16 fires which occurred in the suburbs happened during January and February. In only five cases, however, did the conflagration last beyond one hour; and as they were all fairly distributed over the different sections, there seems to be no reason to suppose that their origin was other than accidental.

The registers of previous convictions appear to have been compiled with care, and the movements of noted bad characters have been attentively watched. Twenty-four habitual thieves were committed to the High Court and severely punished.

As already remarked, the results of the past year are on the whole satisfactory, and indicate fair progress and improvement in the prevention and detection of heinous crime. The lower grades of the police, however, have much to learn. In dealing with them, the issue of general orders, which necessarily leaves much to a discretion which they are not in a position to exercise, must be avoided. They are fully capable, however, of receiving all the simple instruction which is necessary, and means must be adopted to make them understand their legitimate duties and powers, and the responsibilities which they incur by exceeding these powers in making unnecessary and indiscriminate arrests. It often happens that orders in themselves good are spoilt by the thoughtless execution of them by individual policemen; and the fault is too often attributable to their want of respect and consideration for the people with whom they come in contact. The Lieutenant-Governor cannot but think that this fault would be mitigated at least, perhaps even disappear, if the superior officers of the police would carefully instruct their men in regard to this.

During the year the metropolitan police specially distinguished themselves in the varied arrangements which had to be made during the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to Calcutta. The good service rendered by them on that occasion has been separately acknowledged.

Prisons.

IN the Administration Report of last year the Lieutenant-Governor gave prominent expression to his appreciation of the services rendered to the Jail Department by Mr. Heeley, who had been obliged by ill health to take furlough to Europe; and favourable notice was also taken of the great promise of success in administering the department which had been shown by Major Bowie, who had succeeded to its charge. Since the close of the past year the Government has had to regret the death of both Mr. Heeley and Major Bowie. By their untimely deaths the Government has been deprived of the services of two distinguished and zealous public servants. Mr. Heeley was an officer of high talent and varied acquirements. Many and great improvements in the general administration of the Bengal prisons were initiated and carried out by him during his tenure of office, and the measures of reform which had been inaugurated by him were ably taken in hand, and in many respects completed, by his successor. Major Bowie was in charge of the department during nearly the whole of the past year, but owing to failing health he was unable to draw up the report on his administration before he was compelled to leave the country in July last. Both Mr. Heeley and Major Bowie sacrificed their health to the interests of the department. They may be said to have fallen victims in a great measure to the zeal displayed by them in the discharge of their public duties, and both have deserved a special tribute to their memory from Government.

The report on the administration of the jails for the past year has been drawn up by Mr. Beverley, who was selected by the Government to succeed Major Bowie as head of the department. Although Mr. Beverley has laboured under the disadvantages incidental on having so recently taken charge of a new office, and in having been personally unacquainted with the events of the year under review, he has succeeded in submitting a very full and interesting report, and in shewing that the experience which he has gained in the various appointments which he has hitherto held has fully qualified him to discharge the duties of his present charge with ability and success.

The information given under this head is necessarily meagre.

Major Bowie left a memorandum showing that during the year under review he had visited a very large proportion of the jails in these provinces as well as several lock-ups, but the results of the inspections made were not recorded by him. Under the jail rules it is not now necessary that the Inspector-General should in every instance report to Government the observations

Inspections.

made by him on visiting a jail : he is required to do so only in case there may be any necessity for the interposition of Government. It is all the more desirable, therefore, that the results of the inspections held by the Inspector-General, the matters prominently noticed by him, and the action which may have been taken in consequence of the instructions issued by him, should be generally stated in all future annual reports.

The above remarks refer to inspections made by the Inspector-General himself. It is to be observed, however, that necessary as it is that there should be an officer at the disposal of Government to exercise under its orders a general control over the department, it would be in vain to look for efficient administration without some machinery to exercise a more constant and vigilant control over each individual jail. This is amply provided for by the jail rules. It is there laid down, among other things, that each jail shall be visited at least once a month by the official visitors. It is further laid down that in addition to such visits each jail shall be personally inspected by either the Magistrate or the Joint-Magistrate once every week. The importance of strict attention to these provisions has, the Lieutenant-Governor is aware, been repeatedly impressed upon all officers by his predecessors. He has himself, however, had some reason to doubt whether they are acted up to as strictly as they ought to be ; or at least whether the inspections made are of as searching a nature as it is intended that they should be. Attention has been drawn to the subject, as it is not apparent how far the rules in this particular have been carried out. The matter is one of the first importance, and in future will invariably receive prominent notice in the annual reports.

In the previous chapter on Criminal Justice, the Lieutenant-Governor has commented on the decrease observable in crime other than that of a petty character, which alone showed an increase as compared with the previous year. The effect of this decrease, as might be expected, is observable in the jail returns as given in the following table :—

	1873.	1874.	1875.
Remained on 31st December of preceding year	19,748	20,562	20,784
Admitted during the year	68,833	82,207	75,277
Discharged, &c., excluding transfer	68,019	81,985	73,104
Remained on 31st December	20,562	20,784	21,265

Judged by the above statement, the criminality of the past year, while less than that of the previous year, was greater than that of 1873 ; and this is the inference also to be drawn from the police report. The matter is important, as indicating that in a series of years the increase of jail population is continuous, and must be provided for. It is in respect to this matter also that statistics of sentences of flogging passed by Magistrates are of value in a jail report ; and with reference to the remarks made by Mr. Beverley in his report, the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that the Inspector-General will be careful to secure the submission to his department by District Magistrates of complete returns, showing the extent to which recourse has been had to the provisions of the Whipping Act. This Act was passed primarily with a view to relieving Government of part of the

increasing burden of providing additional jail accommodation; and it is important that the head of the Jail Department should have the means of satisfying himself that due recourse is had to the provisions of the Act.

It is with the same object that the Inspector-General is required to watch any marked increase or decrease in the number of convictions followed by imprisonment in individual districts. All the details given in the reports for 1874 and previous years are not necessary, though many of the percentages worked out are interesting from a statistical point of view, and might with advantage be shewn periodically in the course of four or five years. The districts shewn in the police report as those in which the greatest increase of crime has occurred are not in every case the districts in which there has been the largest increase in the number of convicts admitted into the jails; and the discrepancy is explained by the fact that much of the increased crime in certain districts has been of a petty nature, which has admitted of sentences of fine or whipping. The report of the one department thus again helps to explain that of the other.

Adding to the total of admissions given above the 20,784 prisoners who remained in jail at the close of the previous year, the total number of prisoners who were under the charge of the officers of the department during the year was 96,061, 50,893 of whom were convicts. Of this latter number 48,490 were males and 2,403 females. Of the 37,674 persons convicted and sentenced to imprisonment during the year, 2,109 were females, the corresponding number for the previous year having been 2,263. Of the 48,490 males undergoing imprisonment, 23,063 were agriculturists and 16,710 non-agriculturists, 860 were of independent means, 1,724 were in Government service, 3,802 in private service, and 2,331 of no occupation. As regards the ages of convicts, it is observed that 516 males and 52 females were under 16 years of age, and that 57 of the former and 6 of the latter had been previously convicted. The admissions during the year of convicts not exceeding 16 years of age have been 367 males and 46 females. These figures afford ample evidence of the necessity which exists for a reformatory school in these provinces. Orders have already issued for the construction of a building for the purpose at Alipore, and the Lieutenant-Governor hopes that the measures which have been taken will shortly ensure the opening of the institution.

Exceptional cases apart, the determination of the class of jail in which a prisoner shall be incarcerated is dependent on the length of his sentence. Central jails are provided for those sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for periods of one year or upwards, and prisoners convicted at sub-divisions, whose sentences do not exceed 15 days, usually pass their terms in the lock-ups. Subject to the above provisions, the district jails are the places where effect is usually given to sentences of imprisonment. It is very desirable that the jail report should show distinctly how far effect has been given to the measures taken for providing separate places of confinement for long-term and for short-term labouring prisoners respectively. Central jails have been constructed at very great expense, and it is important to see that the existing accommodation is reserved for those for whom it is specially intended. It is also necessary that Government should

be informed whether such long-term prisoners as cannot be provided for in the central jails are imprisoned in such district jails as are suitable for their confinement, and where due appliances exist for giving effect to their sentences.

Of the 50,893 convicts in confinement, 1,829 only were sentenced to simple imprisonment, 34,079 were undergoing sentences of one year and less, and 15,456 sentences of more than one year. The very large proportion of sentences of six months and under suggests a doubt whether sufficient recourse is had to the provisions of the Whipping Act, and whether sentences of imprisonment are not sometimes imposed where fine would be sufficient. The police report shows that in the course of the year 97,236 persons in all were convicted. Against this 75,277 persons were sentenced to imprisonment during the year, and 3,665 were flogged. The balance of 18,294 persons, who would seem therefore to have been punished by fine only, appears to be comparatively small, considering the very large proportion which is borne by petty to heinous offences. This matter is also one which requires the careful attention and scrutiny of District Magistrates.

The Lieutenant-Governor has had occasion to notice a more serious matter, which was brought to light in the report. The legislature has prescribed special penalties in the case of habitual criminals. A fundamental principle of the system of jail administration which has been adopted for these provinces is the segregation of such offenders. The Government, the High Court, and the heads of departments concerned, have called attention to the matter from time to time. Registers have been prescribed and detailed instructions issued for maintaining them. Less than two years ago the inattention with which previous orders had been regarded attracted the Lieutenant-Governor's notice, and he issued special directions on the subject. Only last year, when reviewing the jail report, the importance of ascertaining the antecedents of all prisoners, with a view to the imposition of adequate sentences in the case of old offenders, was specially dwelt upon, and it was pointed out that it was evident from the statistics furnished from many districts that the matter required far greater attention than it had received. After all this it is discouraging to find that matters have scarcely improved, and that little apparently has been done to give effect to the explicit orders issued. It is true that the number of re-convictions now returned is largely in excess of what was the case even two years ago. Still it is shown that in many instances which are cited, the fact of previous convictions has been entirely overlooked or not brought to the notice of judicial officers, and has resulted in the passing of very inadequate sentences; and that where any detailed inquiry into the matter has been made, the result has been to prove that the number of re-convictions shown is very small as compared with what it should be.

The undue detention of convicted prisoners in lock-ups is another subject which has been repeatedly commented on. The results of the past year have been slightly better than those of previous years in respect to this matter. It only remains for the Inspector-General to check at once any instances in which the rules are not strictly adhered to.

The fact that the Inspector-General of Jails is not a medical man, and the growing importance of the subject of sanitation, led the Lieutenant-Governor to arrange that in future the head of the Medical Department should have an opportunity of reviewing the detailed reports on the sanitary condition of the jails and the health of the prisoners, and that his review should be amalgamated with the general jail report as the chapter on sanitation. Due effect has been given to the intentions of Government, and the Lieutenant-Governor has to thank Dr. Beatson for a clear and concise report on the jail administration of the past year viewed in its medical aspect. The total population of the jails during the past year was 96,061. The daily average number of prisoners of the several classes confined in jails and lock-ups during the past two years was as follows :—

CLASS OF PRISONERS.	1874		1875.		TOTAL.	
	Male.	Female.	Male.	Female.	1874.	1875.
Under-trial	803'63	53'63	740'27	41'26	919'26	781'53
Convicted	18,810'91	735'78	18,837'12	725'91	19,546'69	19,563'03
Civil	125'11	2'35	115'10	1'96	127'46	117'06
Total ..	19,801'65	791'76	19,692'49	769'13	20,593'41	20,461'62

The above figures differ somewhat from those shown in the Surgeon-General's report. Adopting his calculations, however (which are apparently meant to include only convicted prisoners confined in jails in 1874, while they include all prisoners in 1875), the death-rate in the past year was 5·02 per cent., against 5·69 in the previous year. As the percentage of deaths in the urban and rural populations of selected circles in these provinces during the past year was only 2·48, the Surgeon-General remarks that the above results are not encouraging, and that "they tend to prove that either the circumstances connected with prison life and discipline exert a very considerable influence on the death-rate, or else that the sanitary condition of our jails must be defective." The percentage of deaths, while somewhat less than that of 1874, was still higher than the average for the six previous years, but considerably lower than that for the 24 years previous to these, when it was 7·88 per cent. With regard to former statistics, the Surgeon-General remarks that the improvement in the health of the jail population since 1868 was no doubt rightly attributed to the greater care and attention bestowed on the general sanitation of the jails and their surroundings, as well as on the diet, water-supply, clothing, &c., of the prisoners. "But," he adds, "it would appear that some insanitary conditions still exist and exert an injurious influence on the health of the prisoners. Such conditions, I am inclined to think (independently of the faulty position or construction of the jails), may be found in certain jails under the heads of overcrowding, defective ventilation, damp, a water-supply of inferior quality, and perhaps an insufficient supply of warm clothing in the cold weather."

The above remarks are suggestive of melancholy considerations, if it really is the case that one-half of the deaths which occur annually in the jails, or over 500 in each year, are due to preventible causes. But the Lieutenant-Governor doubts whether our knowledge of the causes and origin of disease is yet sufficiently advanced to justify such a conclusion. He has noticed that the highest death-rate has not always occurred in the most crowded jails, or in those which are considered to be of the most defective construction from a sanitary point of view. Much of the mortality in the jails is beyond doubt attributable to the fact of imprisonment alone. Criminals also in all countries are men of short lives, and many die in jail of diseases engendered by the dissolute lives which they have led before their conviction. For overcrowding there can now be no excuse, as the orders requiring temporary accommodation to be provided where it occurs are absolute. In the districts where the measure has been reported to be necessary, extra food and extra clothing have been allowed. Damp is inseparable from the climate of Lower Bengal, and the jails are already better in this respect than the huts ordinarily inhabited by the peasantry. Financial exigencies at present prevent the undertaking of many works of even proved necessity, and the Lieutenant-Governor fears that funds will not be available for some time at least to carry out the general reform in jail buildings which the Surgeon-General would wish to see.

All that is at present possible has been done to remove and remedy undoubted evils where they have existed, and to improve the health of the prisoners; and the Lieutenant-Governor has impressed strongly upon the several District Magistrates and jail officers the heavy responsibility which attaches to them in seeing that due effect is given to the orders which have already issued. To see, for instance, that food is issued strictly in accordance with the prescribed scales, that it is impartially distributed, and that it is of good quality; to see that clothing is regularly issued and applied to its proper purpose, that the strong do not oppress the weak, as there is reason to believe is sometimes the case in this matter; to see that due attention is paid to each prisoner's physical health before prescribing the class of labour on which he shall engage; to see that the wards are well ventilated, but not to an extreme, and that overcrowding is duly provided against. On all these subjects definite rules exist regarding which there can be no mistake.

Turning to the statistics of individual jails, the Lieutenant-Governor finds that there were again in the past year seven jails in which the rate of mortality exceeded 10 per cent., as follows:—

				Average strength	Number of deaths	Death-rate per cent	Death-rate in 1874.
Julpigoree	...	...	...	144 66	37	25·57	27·02
Russa	...	...	...	258·98	36	13·90	6·49
Rungpore	...	...	...	486 14	60	12·34	17·68
Baraset	..	...	...	220·11	27	12·26	8·16
Backergunge	...	...	...	339·93	41	12·06	9·15
Gya	...	...	...	313 44	40	11·64	17·13

It will be observed that three of the above, the Julpigoree, Rungpore, and Gya jails, were in the same category in 1874. Compared with

that year, however, there has been a marked improvement in the death-rate in the two last named jails. The Julpigoree jail has lately proved to be so hopelessly unhealthy (although when visited by the late Lieutenant-Governor in 1872 he considered it to be quite healthy and with excellent accommodation for the number of prisoners confined there), that orders have issued for its abandonment and for the transfer of all long-term prisoners to the jails of neighbouring districts. Short-term men have also been removed into camp. Of the 37 deaths in this jail, 11 were from cholera and 21 from dysentery and diarrhoea. In the Russa jail 36 deaths occurred, of which 32 were attributable to bowel complaints. The jail is constructed to hold 248 prisoners, and the average number in confinement during the past year was 258. The high death-rate is ascribed by the Superintendent to the overcrowding, which, as indicated by the above figures, occurred during the year, as well as to defective ventilation and water of inferior quality. But the Lieutenant-Governor observes that in 1874, when the overcrowding, so far as can be gathered from the returns, was much in excess of what was the case in the past year, the rate of mortality was more than one-half less; and similarly in 1873, when the overcrowding was slightly in excess of last year, the mortality was less than one-fourth of what is now reported. If the ventilation is really deficient, there can be no reason why a matter so easily remedied should not have been looked to; and the admission by the Superintendent that he has allowed the matter to remain unattended to for a series of years, is not satisfactory. In what way the water-supply of the past year was inferior to that of previous years, or what steps have been taken to remedy it, has not been explained.

In Rungpore the death-rate, though still deplorably high, was much lower than during the previous year. In the opinion of the Surgeon-General "overcrowding, damp, and malaria," may most probably be "accepted as the causes of the high mortality in this jail." It would seem not only that the jail was overcrowded, but that it was so to a most frightful extent, as it is shown that an average of 446 prisoners were nightly herded into barracks meant to contain 256 persons only. But the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to think that the positive orders against overcrowding have not been totally disregarded in this way, and that the local officers are only amenable to censure for the careless manner in which their returns have been drawn up. The first consideration which suggests itself is that if 446·88 was the "average jail population," 441 cannot have been the maximum population in any one day, as shewn in the returns, and that an erroneous system of calculating averages must have been followed through some misapprehension; the next is that as for years past the jail has been returned as capable of containing 256 prisoners, no account can have been taken of the temporary accommodation which has been provided in this jail under the orders of Government to meet overcrowding. The Lieutenant-Governor has asked to be informed exactly if any, or what, overcrowding was allowed to occur, and what the correct figures should be. It is impossible to provide against the malaria which is prevalent throughout this district; but to counteract the effects of it as far as possible, the Lieutenant-Governor has sanctioned extra milk diet

being served out experimentally to a certain number of the prisoners. As to damp, the jail is built on as good a site as is available anywhere in the station or near it. The buildings, though old, are well constructed, and in part two-storied—vastly superior, in fact, to any houses occupied by the poorer natives in the district.

In the Baraset jail 27 deaths occurred; but used as this jail is as a hospital for the old, infirm, and sick prisoners of other jails, its circumstances are sufficiently peculiar to account for a high percentage of mortality. In the Backergunge jail the capacity of the barracks was apparently always considerably in excess of requirements, yet 4 females and 37 males died; four of the latter being under-trial prisoners. The jail has long been condemned as being badly constructed and situated, but nothing is said in the report as to what action has been taken towards carrying out the improvements and reconstructions which were long since approved of. The Lieutenant-Governor has called for a report on the subject. The Gya jail, similarly, has long been condemned as unsuitable. A site has been already selected for a new jail, but want of funds has hitherto prevented any further action being taken for its construction. The Lieutenant-Governor is, however, surprised to observe that insufficient clothing is one of the reasons assigned for the sickness which prevailed in this jail. On the report of the late Commission, which inquired into the state of the jails in the Behar districts, authority was given for the issue of all the extra clothing recommended by them. The immediate attention of the Inspector-General has been called to this matter. It is not clear why in Midnapore the mortality in the district jail has been so constantly greater than that in the central jail during the past three years. Whether there is any such difference in the management of these two institutions as to account for this result should be the subject of careful inquiry.

The marked decrease of mortality in many of the Behar jails is satisfactory. In Chumparun it was 6·95 per cent. only, against 15·20 in 1874 and 14·74 in 1873. In the Bhagulpore central jail 3·30 only, against 12·08 in 1873. In Shahabad and Meemapore there was a similar improvement compared with the same year, but a falling off as compared with 1874. In Purneah the variation in the figures from year to year is very noticeable.

The expenditure on jail buildings incurred by the Jail Department during the past year amounted to Rs. 15,839 only, while that incurred by the Public Works Department amounted to Rs. 2,46,264. The central jails at Hazareebagh, Bhagulpore, and Midnapore, have now been almost completed, and only remains to supply a few additional buildings. For the improvement of existing jails large sums were disbursed in Rajshahye, Dinagepore, and Jessore, and Rs. 10,346 were expended towards the construction of the new jail at Mozufferpore.

The number of prisoners who escaped during the year was 121, against 142 in 1874. In the Administration Report for last year the Lieutenant-Governor called attention to the apparent insecurity of many of the sub-divisional lock-ups as indicated by the returns, and the matter is one which still

Jail buildings.

Guards and escapes.

requires attention. The question of the relative efficiency of police and warder guards is one which has been long pending decision. The system at present adopted is admittedly faulty. Difficulty has been experienced in enlisting men with the proper qualifications and amenable to discipline. The result has been that many have been dismissed and punished.

The system of classifying prisoners prescribed for adoption in the jails of these provinces is simple. It is fully explained in the Jail Code, and in the absence of special orders must be strictly carried out wherever it is possible to do so. The Lieutenant-Governor has found it necessary to impress this upon all concerned, as it would seem that certain Jail Superintendents have been at insufficient pains to acquaint themselves with what was required of them. It is also observed that it is stated that the Superintendents do not always obtain the assistance which is necessary to enable them to give proper effect to the rules, owing to the insufficient information which is furnished by some Magistrates as regards the crimes and antecedents of prisoners. The Lieutenant-Governor has already noticed the imperfect manner in which the records of previous convictions have been prepared in certain districts. According to rule, other matters, also, which are ascertainable as regards a prisoner from a reference to the records, are required to be entered in the memorandum which accompanies his warrant. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that all Magistrates will pay stricter attention to this matter. Meanwhile the Inspector-General should call for periodical reports as to the extent to which the requirements of the rules have been observed in the several jails, and should bring to the notice of Government all cases in which there has been any disregard of the rules.

The jails in which arrangements have not yet been made to give effect to the system of classification prescribed are Burdwan, Maldah, Pubna, Rungpore, Bogra, and Furreedpore. At the two jails last named the state of affairs is particularly unsatisfactory, and the Inspector-General has been desired to see that in these jails immediate arrangements are made for the segregation of under-trial from convicted prisoners, as well as for giving effect to such further arrangements as may be found practicable for separating the latter according to their proper classes.

There has been a marked decrease in the number of cases in which it was found necessary to inflict punishment on prisoners during the past year, the number having been 25,212 as against 32,174 in 1874. The punishments also were of a less severe description. The number of cases in which corporal punishment had to be resorted to was 2,973 only, as against 4,143 in 1874 and 4,738 in 1873. The success attending the introduction of the mark system into the jails was noticed in the Administration Report for 1874. In the present jail report Mr. Beverley writes,—“Of the mark system nearly all officers speak in terms of high approval. The exceptions are mainly in the case of small jails, where, owing to the small number of prisoners who come under its operation, there are fewer opportunities of observing its benefits.” And again,

Internal discipline.

Classification of the prisoners.

Punishments.

The mark system.

—“There can be no doubt, judging from the reports which lie before me, that when the system is thoroughly understood by the prisoners and faithfully carried out by the Superintendent, it acts as a powerful incentive to industry and good conduct on the part of the former, while placing an additional instrument of reward or punishment in the hand of the latter.” The efficacy and advantages of the system have now been fully proved; and whatever may be the individual views of some Magistrates on the subject, the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that all will now endeavour to give due effect to the rules which have been issued. The cases where failure to give effect to the rules has occurred are, the Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe, very exceptional. The great majority of jail officers, and particularly those possessing special qualifications and experience, have gladly adopted the system, and, entering into its spirit, have in some instances suggested means for its fuller application. Much of the imperfection in the rules is due to the fact, which had to be regarded in drawing them up, that most jails are in the charge of officers who have other onerous duties to perform, and whose time is very limited. For this reason, among others, a monthly award of marks only has been prescribed for natives. If at any of the central jails (where there are special officers in charge) it is found that the Superintendent is able with advantage to award marks weekly or even daily, the Lieutenant-Governor will be prepared to entertain any proposals made with a view to introducing the change into particular jails. The standard statements prescribed by the Government of India, which are intended for general use in all provinces, do not shew the number of prisoners who have come under the marks system and the results. The Lieutenant-Governor therefore approves of the proposal made by the Inspector-General to call for separate statistics in order to enable him to watch the working of the system in the several jails. The information given on the above points in the Jail Report of the past year is meagre. It is estimated that 12,000 prisoners came under the mark system during the past year, and that of these about 350 were released under the rules before the expiration of their sentences, the longest term of remission granted having been one year ten months and ten days.

With a daily average of 20,408 prisoners of all classes, 735, or 3·6 per cent., were employed as prison officers. In the new Jail Code the rules regarding rewarding prisoners for good conduct by such promotion have been revised, and the alterations made will, the Lieutenant-Governor trusts, meet the difficulty which has been hitherto experienced in finding a sufficient number of men qualified to hold these appointments.

Of prisoners undergoing their sentence in jails, 19,353·32 of the daily average present were sentenced to hard labour, of whom 17,990·62 were effectives, the rest being infirm, sick, or convalescent. The effectives are shown to have been employed as follows:—

As prison officers	...	...	...	...	...	735·23
Ditto servants	...	...	...	...	...	2,555·89
Building and repairing jails	...	...	...	...	...	3,751·11
On jail gardens	...	...	...	...	...	904·28
On manufactures	...	...	...	...	...	9,370·66
Extramural	...	...	...	...	...	543·72

Definite rules having been laid down regarding the employment of prisoners on penal labour, hard labour, and light labour, respectively, future reports should invariably state how far effect has been given to them. The Lieutenant-Governor trusts that there are not now any jails without sufficient means of providing prisoners with penal labour for the prescribed portions of their sentences. If there are any such, the matter should have the immediate attention of the Inspector-General. The large number of labouring prisoners engaged as prison servants is a matter which should be inquired into. By rule not more than 10 per cent. of the whole number should be so employed. The very large number of prisoners employed on jail building has already attracted the Inspector-General's attention. It should be a matter for inquiry whether all the work on which prisoners were thus engaged was provided for in the budget estimates; and if not, the practice of employing prisoners on unsanctioned works must be put a stop to. The monthly returns submitted to the Inspector-General show the numbers only of the prisoners employed on public works and jail buildings. It is open to him, however, to require explanation as to the sanction under which they are so employed, and to see that a yearly return is rendered of the value of the work done by them in reduction of estimates.

The daily average number of prisoners under instruction was 1,431.

Education of prisoners. Much progress in the matter of education is not perhaps to be looked for, still the matter is one in which the Lieutenant-Governor trusts that Superintendents will interest themselves. The grant of extra marks authorized by the rules to convicts teaching others should serve as an incentive in this particular.

Financial.

The following table contrasts the expenditure and receipts of the Jail Department during the past three years:—

	1875.	1874.	1873.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Supervision ...	41,417	48,126	41,680
Rations ...	5,61,832	6,78,228	5,89,346
Establishment ...	3,10,739	2,98,746	2,42,943
Hospital charges ...	33,346	31,973	24,576
Clothing ...	73,743	65,985	63,701
Contingencies ...	63,751	74,479	58,775
Petty repairs and construction, tread-mills, &c. ...	23,315	18,652	18,193
Police charges ...	1,58,147	1,64,084	1,80,679
Public Works Department charges ...	2,46,264	3,77,893	3,88,833
Total ...	15,12,554	17,58,166	16,08,726
Charges for manufacture...	5,52,144	5,41,673	5,15,272
Gross expenditure ...	20,64,698	22,99,839	21,23,998
Manufacturing receipts ...	8,28,302	7,55,902	8,08,413
Net expenditure ...	12,36,396	15,43,937	13,15,585

The figures given above for 1874 differ somewhat from those submitted in last year's report.

The decrease, compared with 1874, shown by the above statements to have occurred in the cost of jails appears chiefly under the heads of "rations" and "public works." This is attributable to the prices of food-grains having fallen since the late scarcity, and to restrictions having been placed on expenditure on jail buildings for financial reasons. The increase in the cost of clothing is chiefly due to the adoption of the recommendations of the Commission on the Behar Jails for the issue of a more liberal scale. Excluding manufacturing charges, the following table shows the comparative gross cost per head of each prisoner during the past two years under the several chief heads of charge:—

	1875.			1874.		
	Rs.	A.	P.	Rs.	A.	P.
Supervision	1	14	11	2	3	5
Rations	26	6	10	31	7	1
Establishment	14	8	6	12	14	3
Hospital, clothing, contingencies, and petty repairs	9	1	6	8	13	0
Police charges	7	6	4	7	8	11
Public Works Department charges ...	11	8	3	17	6	7
Total	70	14	4	80	5	3

Excluding public works charges also, the cost of each prisoner was about Rs. 5 a month. The jails which show the largest expenditure per head on account of rations are Hooghly, Jessore, Darjeeling, Julpigoree, and Hazareebagh Central Jail. Indeed the cost on this account in the district last mentioned is so much in excess, not only of the average, but also of the charges in surrounding districts, as to call for some special explanation. The police charges of some of the smaller jails, such as Maldah and Furreedpore, appear to be abnormal. There should be in future a large decrease under this head as regards the Dehree Convict Camp, now located permanently at Buxar.

Jail manufactures.

The following figures are given as showing what are called the "profits" on manufactures:—

			Rs.
Total credits on account of manufactures ... ..	...	...	11,61,311
Total debits ditto ditto ... ..	...	...	9,69,746
Excess of credits or profit ... ..	...	...	1,91,565

This gives a result less by Rs. 1,90,035 than the figures similarly obtained for the previous year. With regard to the great apparent falling off in the profits realized, Mr. Beverley explains that, taking the value of goods sold, as well as of those supplied for public purposes, and setting off against this the cash expenditure on manufactures, the result was a credit balance of Rs. 2,76,158 in 1875, against Rs. 2,14,229 in 1874. The balance in favour of 1875 was thus more than absorbed by the increase of goods supplied to the public departments without cash payment. Taking cash payment into the treasury alone, there

was a decrease of Rs. 749 in the receipts of 1875. The continued depression of the jute trade has so much decreased the profits made at the Alipore Jail as fully to account for the difference in the pecuniary results indicated above. The balance of profit shown against this jail was only Rs. 81,300, against Rs. 2,88,000 in the previous year. Taking all other jails and lock-ups, the result was a balance of Rs. 1,10,300, against Rs. 93,600 only in the previous year.

Allusion has been made above to the fact that jails are not credited in all cases with the value of the labour of prisoners employed by the Public Works Department. Similarly, credit is not taken for the work done in the Alipore Jail Press. The work done at the press, however, is estimated; and it appears that in the past year the net value of the outturn of work was Rs. 1,05,404, giving a net profit of Rs. 317 for each prisoner employed in the press.

With respect to the question of jail manufactures generally, little can be added to the remarks made in last year's report. If any great reduction in jail charges is to be effected by means of these manufactures, it is from arrangements to be made in central jails that improvement must chiefly be expected. In these jails only will it be possible to carry on any industry on the scale which is necessary to secure constant profits. The question of supplying machinery to these jails has not yet been satisfactorily settled. Meanwhile every effort must be made to carry on the usual jail industries to advantage. The Lieutenant-Governor, however, is inclined to think that there is much loss of power in some jails, resulting from carrying on too many different kinds of manufactures, and in making up articles which do not find a ready sale. Superintendence, he considers, would be both cheaper and easier, and probably profits larger, if one particular kind of industry, suitable to the requirements or natural productions of the locality, was selected for the employment of the bulk of the labouring prisoners. Economy also appears to be insufficiently considered, too many prisoners being employed on jail services or miscellaneous work.

Civil Justice.

THE usual statistical tables and returns will be found in the Appendix.

The total number of suits coming before the High Court in its original jurisdiction during the year 1875 amounted to 1,414, as against 1,356 in 1874 and 1,327 in 1873. Of these the total disposed of was 619, so that there were left pending 795 cases, as against 772 and 668 cases at the close of the years 1874 and 1873 respectively. It will thus be seen that the work of the original side of the High Court is steadily increasing, and the pending file is annually getting heavier.

On the appellate side the High Court sat for 248 days during the year 1875, and disposed of 6,815 appeals and applications, against 7,453 and 7,254 disposed of in 1874 and 1873 respectively. 4,326 cases were left pending at the close of 1875, against 3,634 and 3,097 at the end of 1874 and 1873 respectively. Among the appellate business disposed of, 266 were regular and 2,326 special appeals; while 1,154 were criminal cases, and the miscellaneous orders on applications in and out of Court amounted to 2,470. There was a falling off in the number of appeals filed, and a large falling off in the number of appeals disposed of, owing, it is stated, to the Court having been left with one Barrister Judge less than its usual complement from February, when Sir Richard Couch left for Baroda, to end of June, when the present Chief Justice arrived, and also to the fact of some of the Judges having been absent on leave during the latter part of the year. The consequence was that at the close of the year the number of pending cases exceeded that at the end of 1874 by 692.

It was observed in the Administration Report for 1874-75 that the number of cases instituted in that year had exceeded those of the previous year, while the amount in litigation had decreased. The reverse of this has happened in 1875-76, the number of cases having fallen off concurrently with an increase in the amount at issue. The following statement shows the number of cases instituted, together with the value of the property in litigation, during each of the last five years:—

Calcutta Court of Small Causes.		Cases instituted.	Amount in dispute. Rs.			Cases instituted.	Amount in dispute. Rs.
1871-72	...	31,536	15,28,938	1874-75	..	34,983	15,70,142
1872-73	...	34,843	16,23,110	1875-76	...	34,502	15,82,873
1873-74	...	34,583	16,11,535				

This shows a slight decrease in litigation, the number of suits instituted being less than during any of the three previous years. Although the Court was open for 266 days during the year, as against 260 days in the previous year, it may be presumed that the falling off is attributable in some measure to the interruption of business which was caused by the closing of the courts during the last days of the year in honour of the visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

Classed according to the value of the claims made, the number of suits instituted during the last three years was as follows:—

VALUE OF SUITS.					1873-74.	1874-75.	1875-76.
					Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Under Rs.	50	..	..	...	28,584	29,083	28,711
Ditto	„	100	...	...	2,703	2,693	2,577
Ditto	„	500	..	...	2,789	2,768	2,871
Ditto	„	1,000	...	..	480	473	502
Above	„	1,000	...	...	27	36	41

The increase in the number of suits instituted for sums above Rs. 500, which has resulted in shewing an increase of Rs. 12,731 in the total value of suits, notwithstanding the falling off in the total institutions, is satisfactory, as indicating greater confidence on the part of the public in the judgments of the Court. Four cases were referred for the opinion of the High Court under section 7 of Act XXVI of 1864. In all the decision of the Court was upheld.

Of the 1,326 cases pending from the previous year, and of those instituted during the year, 34,662 were disposed of, as against 35,117 in 1874-75. In 15,114 of these judgment was given for the plaintiffs, and in 1,861 for the defendants; 5,990 were nonsuited or struck off, and 12,197 were compromised. The number of cases pending at the close of the year (1,166) was below the average. Of these cases, 742 had been instituted towards the close of the year but were not returnable within that period, and 424 had been postponed after hearing in part.

The total number of after-judgment processes applied for was 9,503. Of these 6,169 were warrants against the person. Only 2,834 of these warrants were executed. 3,334 processes for execution against the property of debtors were applied for, and of these 2,641 were executed. The executions under the latter head show an increase, and those under the former head a decrease, as compared with the figures for 1874-75. The number of bench warrants issued for the arrest of defendants before judgment has fallen from 109 to 62.

The Distress Act of 1875 has been in operation throughout the year, and the increased number of processes of distraint which have been issued under it shows that it has fairly met the requirements of suitors. The total amount of rent involved exhibits an increase from Rs. 22,266 to Rs. 27,417.

Some difficulty has been experienced in selecting persons qualified by character and attainments to act as law agents under the recognition of the Court. It is considered inadvisable to relax the rule recently adopted in favour of persons who have hitherto acted as suit-brokers about the precincts of the Court. It is of the highest importance that the practice of touting should be discouraged as far as possible; and the Lieutenant-Governor believes that much benefit to the public will ultimately result from a rigid adherence to the rule that has been laid down, that no law agent should be recognized by the Court who is not authorized to act in the High Court and in the courts subordinate to it.

The receipts of the year from different sources amounted to Rs. 1,99,256, as against Rs. 2,04,575. On the other hand, the item of house rent has entirely disappeared from the list of disbursements; and this circumstance, in conjunction with a large saving in the salaries of the Judges and in the contingent charges, has resulted in a decrease of nearly Rs. 20,000 in the expenditure. The net sum to be credited to the general revenues amounted to Rs. 47,291, as against Rs. 33,321 in the previous year.

The following table shows the totals of the various kinds of original civil suits instituted in the courts of the interior during the year 1875 :—

INSTITUTED IN.	Suits for money.	Under rent law.	Other suits.	Total.
Small Cause Courts ...	45,075	.....	.....	45,075
Moonsifs' " ...	123,510	115,977	35,136	274,623
Sub. Judges' " ...	1,519	587	1,557	3,663
District Judges' " ...	46	21	38	105
Revenue " ...	..	7,126	.. ..	7,126
Total	170,150	123,711	36,731	330,592

The table below shows the number of cases under trial and the number disposed of by the various classes of courts in 1875 :—

Class of Courts.	Total of suits for disposal.	Total disposed of.
Small Cause Courts ...	47,665	45,039
Moonsifs' " ...	329,372	271,810
Sub. Judges' " ...	5,859	3,787
District Judges' " ...	429	252
Revenue " ...	11,024	7,161
Total ...	394,349	328,049

The following statement shows the number of original suits, including Small Cause Court cases, but exclusive of cases in the

revenue courts, instituted, disposed of, and pending, in the civil courts for the last three years :—

	1873.	1874.	1875.	INCREASE AS COMPARED WITH	
				1873.	1874.
Instituted	291,893	279,506	323,466	32,073	43,960
Disposed of	300,544	282,183	320,858	20,344	38,755
Pending	83,752	35,945	43,493	9,741	7,548

It will thus be seen that although the steady increase which had taken place in the number of institutions for some years past was not maintained in 1874, the causes which led to this depression having been since removed, litigation has resumed its original elasticity, and the figures for 1875 not only exhibit a large increase (about 44,000) over those of 1874, but a considerable increase (above 32,000) over those of 1873 also.

The outturn of the disposal of suits for the year 1875 is favourable, showing an increase of 38,755 over 1874 and 20,344 over 1873. This increase in the number of suits disposed of is attributed partly to the extra moonsifs, 10 in number, entertained for about 6½ months, partly to the exertions of the permanent staff, and in some measure also to the fact of the great part of the increased work being composed of uncontested cases.

But although the several officers worked hard to dispose of the cases in their respective files, the pending file at the close of 1875 was heavier than ever. It is satisfactory, however, to notice that the number of original suits pending more than one year was reduced from 235 in 1874 to 204 in 1875.

The following statement shows the proportion per cent. which the different classes of suits have borne to each other during the last three years :—

	Total of 1873.	Total of 1874.	Total of 1875.	PERCENTAGE.		
				1873.	1874.	1875.
Suits for money, &c.	128,504	116,304	125,075	47.996	45.734	44.937
Rent suits	108,067	101,146	116,555	38.720	39.774	41.878
Suits for immovable property	24,998	23,506	23,433	9.335	11.209	10.212
Suits for specific performance of contract	2,146	1,206	1,034	.814	.479	.371
Suits to declare and establish rights to real property, including pre-emption, foreclosure, &c.	3,241	3,296	3,214	1.208	1.296	1.155
Suits to declare and establish personal rights.	2,154	1,430	1,646	.804	.562	.494
Suits for an account	678	692	769	.265	.272	.276
Suits relating to religious endowments	43	67	58	.016	.025	.020
Suits to set aside judgments, &c. ...	543	496	730	.209	.191	.262
Suits for dissolution of marriage	85	79	62	.031	.031	.022
Suits for enforcement of matrimonial rights.	702	551	410	.269	.216	.147
Suits for partition	492	413	569	.183	.162	.203
Suits relating to shipping	8	.	.....	.001	.000	.000
Suits relating to religion and caste ...	179	129	109	.065	.045	.038
Total	267,735	254,306	278,331	100	100	100

The classified values of the suits disposed of are given below for the last four years :—

		1872.	1873.	1874.	1875.
	Rs.				
Not exceeding ...	5	81,763	84,458	29,600	33,825
Ditto ...	20	84,337	93,370	65,518	95,376
Ditto ...	100	129,755	140,773	131,925	145,399
Ditto ...	500	35,260	40,118	35,935	38,353
Ditto ...	1,000	3,920	4,859	4,064	4,513
Ditto ...	5,000	2,676	3,228	3,026	2,996
Ditto ...	10,000	436	423	421	408
Ditto ...	1,00,000	253	267	235	246
Exceeding ...	1,00,000	32	22	20	13
Total ...		288,437	318,018	290,694	320,900

It will be seen that there has been an increase in the lower value suits, that is, suits not exceeding Rs. 1,000 in value, and a falling off in suits the value of which is above that limit; thus the number of suits of the last description during the last three years is in—

1873 ...	...	...	...	...	3,940
1874 ...	...	...	...	...	3,752
1875 ...	...	...	...	...	3,661

There has been a slight falling off in the execution of decrees, owing, it is supposed, to the decrease of litigation in 1874. The results are thus shown :—

YEAR.	DECREES EXECUTED		Amount realized.	
	Completely.	Partially.		
			Rs.	A. P.
1873 ...	65,567	140,907	1,12,86,732	13 3½
1874 ...	63,380	126,201	1,21,66,380	7 0
1875 ...	60,291	110,999	1,19,87,061	15 7

The following table shows the number of cases instituted, disposed of, and pending, in the Small Cause Courts in the mofussil during the past three years :—

	1873.	1874.	1875.	Increase over 1874.
Instituted ...	42,512	37,542	45,352	7,810
Disposed of ...	42,429	37,658	45,000	7,342
Pending ...	2,801	2,132	2,533	361

The general increase in the business of the Courts is maintained also as regards cases cognizable by Small Cause Courts. Although a larger number of cases were disposed of in 1875 than in 1874, the

pending file left is heavier than before owing to the more numerous institutions. It is, however, satisfactory to notice that of the 2,533 cases pending, only six were of more than six weeks' standing.

The business of the Appellate Courts for the last three years is thus shown :—

COURTS OF APPEAL.					Total number of appeals for decision.			Total number of appeals disposed of.		
					1873.	1874.	1875.	1873.	1874.	1875.
Sub. Judges' Courts	...	...	...	...	17,889	15,838	16,729	12,107	11,658	11,869
Collectors' Courts	...	...	...	...	598	619	468	486	571	871
District Judges' Courts	{	Civil	...	...	24,301	24,675	16,795	7,942	7,679	4,264
		Revenue	...	...	5,142	4,598	11,992	2,539	2,108	4,544
		From original jurisdiction	...	...	35	42	68	24	81	57
		Regular appeals from District	...	...	617	685	698	271	811	255
High Court	...	...	Courts	...	4,680	5,374	5,415	2,453	2,813	2,241
			Special appeals	...						
Total					52,787	51,321	52,160	25,822	25,161	23,661

Registration.

THE office of Inspector-General of Registration was held successively during the year under review by Messrs. Beverley, Hurley, and Hopkins, and then again by Mr. Beverley, who in August last made over charge finally to Mr. Bourdillon, by whom the departmental report has been prepared.

The results reported are generally satisfactory. The steady increase observed of late years in the number of registrations effected has been fairly maintained. The number of offices has been considerably increased, and though there has been a falling off in the net receipts of the department, this is alone attributable to the larger outlay which has been incurred with the view of affording increased facilities for registration.

The important experiment of introducing the use of printed forms for the registration of agricultural leases and bonds of small amounts was under trial during the year. The results were not altogether encouraging, but they were such as to justify the continuance and extension of the scheme, the object of which is to effect a considerable saving in the maintenance of registration offices, with a corresponding diminution in the charges levied from the public. The matter is one to which prominent attention was called last year, and special instructions have since been separately issued to all District Registrars, impressing on them the importance attached by Government to the experiment, and the necessity of their using their best endeavours to secure its success.

Towards the close of the year the passing of the Mahomedan Marriage Registration Act placed in the hands of the Inspector-General the supervision of what practically is a new department. No action beyond the preparation of the rules and forms for the introduction of the Act was taken during the period under review. Effect has now, however, been given to the provisions of the Act in a large number of districts in Eastern Bengal, and the control and supervision of the new offices which have been opened out will add largely to the labours of the Inspector-General and of the inspecting officers of the department.

On previous occasions the necessity of exercising strict supervision over all registration offices has been frequently impressed upon the superior officers of the department. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to be able to say that in the past year the amount of inspection work undertaken was largely in

excess of that in previous years. In all 534 inspections of 266 offices were held. Of these, 250 inspections were made by the Inspector-General and the two Inspectors immediately subordinate to him, and the remainder by district, special, and sub-divisional sub-registrars. The Lieutenant-Governor, however, has to notice that with a few exceptions the inspections made by local officers were neither so frequent nor so thorough as they ought to be. Now that their attention has been drawn specially to the matter by the Inspector-General, it is to be hoped that the report for the current year will show an improvement in this respect. The results of the inspections made are stated to have been generally satisfactory. The large increase in the number of offices has inevitably resulted in the appointment of some inefficient and untrustworthy officers. These are being removed, and the rest of the staff are gradually gaining a thorough acquaintance with their work.

The Lieutenant-Governor is satisfied to find that attention has been given to the points noticed last year regarding the time occupied in the registering of documents. As a rule, it is stated that the results have been most unfavourable at sub-divisional offices, where the sub-registrar is also in charge of the sub-division. If it be found in any case that the sub-divisional officer really has not sufficient time to attend to the details of the registration office, steps will be taken to relieve him of the charge and to create a rural office.

The number of offices of all kinds under the control of the Inspector-General at the close of the year was 290, against 246 at the opening of the year, thus:—

				1874-75.	1875-76.
Calcutta Registry Office	...	...	...	1	1
District offices in charge of	salaried	sub-registrars	...	22	24
Ditto ditto	ex-officio	ditto	...	19	18
Ditto ditto	rural	ditto	...	1	1
Sub-divisional offices in charge of	ex-officio	ditto	...	71	69
Ditto ditto		Cantonment Magistrate	...	1	1
Ditto ditto		rural sub-registrars	...	11	16
Rural offices in the interior	...	...	...	120	155
Special offices	...	...	...	...	5

The increase observable from the above statement in the number of rural offices is satisfactory. It is clear, however, that though the number of registration offices has been increased from 156 to 290 during the past five years, much remains yet to be done to meet the wants of the people in certain localities. As the advantages of registration become more and more appreciated by the people, many additional offices will have to be opened out, and District Registrars are held responsible for making proposals for the establishment of new offices whenever they have reason to believe that they are required in any part of their districts.

Mr. Bourdillon gives in his report a comparative statement of the chief results deducible from the statistics of the department for a series of years, commencing with 1865-66. The most noticeable matter is the great increase in the total number of registrations effected. Ten years ago these amounted to only 98,183, five years ago they had increased to 241,713, last year the number was 457,651, or 33,778 more than

in the previous year. The gross receipts during the same period have increased from Rs. 3,25,089 in 1865-66 to Rs. 5,56,505 in the past year, while the net receipts were Rs. 99,123 and Rs. 1,39,103 in the same years, respectively. As already noticed, the falling off in the net receipts, as compared with the previous year, when they amounted to Rs. 1,65,372, is attributable to the larger expenditure incurred in opening out new offices. It is to be remarked, however, with reference to the surplus which continues year by year to be claimed as the financial result of the working of the department, that the figures given can only be accepted with some reservation, as it appears that it has not been usual to include expenditure in the Public Works Department on account of office buildings as an item of charge against the department. An omission of this kind seriously vitiates the returns, and renders inferences from the figures contained in them of little value. The Lieutenant-Governor is therefore glad to find that the matter has had the attention of the Inspector-General, and that the statement of the results of the past year has been modified accordingly. In future the precise sum which may be available as a surplus for meeting the requirements of the department and increasing the facilities for registration will be carefully ascertained and noted.

The following comparative table shows the extent to which the facilities at present afforded for registration are taken advantage of in the several provinces under this Government :—

PROVINCES.	Number of offices.		Number of registrations.		Population.	Percentage of increase of registration.	
	1874-75.	1875-76.	1874-75.	1875-76.		1874-75.	1875-76.
Bengal	108	204	341,914	374,520	34,207,735	39.8	9.5
Behar	69	66	65,967	64,804	12,736,101	8.1	-2.0
Chota Nagpore	10	9	9,345	10,464	3,419,591	2.3	11.9
Orissa	9	11	6,647	8,063	3,034,690	-13.6	21.3

Thus 81 per cent. of the whole number of registrations was effected in Bengal Proper, and while, as compared with the previous year, there was a slight falling off in the number of registrations in Behar, there was a large increase in the number effected in Orissa, where in the previous year, on the other hand, there had been a large decrease.

The following statement shows the number of documents registered under each chief class in the past as compared with the previous year :—

A. Registrations affecting immovable property in Book I—

	1874-75.	1875-76.
(a) Compulsory	250,340	265,265
(b) Optional	98,970	106,829

B. Registrations affecting movable property, Book IV—

(a) Obligations for the payment of money	57,205	65,610
(b) Instruments of sale	2,656	2,940
(c) All other registrations in Book IV	13,281	15,604

C. Wills and authorities to adopt 1,362 1,608

Under the head of compulsory registrations affecting immovable property, the largest increase has occurred in the

Perpetual leases.

number of perpetual leases which have been registered. In the past year these amounted to 109,399, against 100,325 in the previous year. As usual, these registrations have been effected in the districts of Eastern Bengal. Jessore this year stands first, with 24,735 registrations of perpetual leases, and is followed by Backergunge with 21,060 and Chittagong with 19,567. Notwithstanding this very marked result in the returns of the two first-named districts, the matter does not appear to have been noticed by the District Registrars. The Registrars of Chittagong and Noakholly, however, throw some fresh light on the subject, and have attributed the practice of granting perpetual leases to the greater facilities which are afforded to the landlords of realizing their rents under the law applicable to the sale of putni tenures. In Chittagong it is stated that fully three-fourths of the area of the estates in that district have been already granted in perpetual leases to middlemen. The remarks made by the Registrar of Noakholly are particularly worthy of attention, and it will be interesting to observe whether his anticipation proves correct that, with the introduction of the improvements in the rent law which are in contemplation, the practice of giving permanent leases will be considerably restricted. As regards other leases the registration of which is compulsory, that is, leases from year to year or for any period exceeding one year, the Inspector-General remarks that the increase observable (3,194 documents only) is insignificant. It would indeed be accounted for by the fluctuations in a single district (Chumparun), and would form no basis for any general conclusion. The increase in the number of documents for the sale and mortgage of immovable property of the value of Rs. 100 and upwards is normal, and is so generally distributed throughout the several districts as to call for no remark. An increase of nearly 100 per cent. in the number of instruments of gift of immovable property is unexplained. The figures, however, for any one district are small, and this may account for the oversight.

The number of short leases for one year or less registered was 2,649, against 2,223 in the previous year. These paltry results show either that in the popular estimation instruments of this nature are not worth the trouble or expense of registration, or that they are frequently merely parol engagements.

By far the largest increase under the head of optional registrations is shown to have occurred in the case of bonds.

Bonds.

In the course of the past six years the number of these instruments registered has trebled. Last year in the district of Jessore alone the number was 31,452, against 22,498 in the previous year. In Dinagepore, Rajshahye, and Bhagulpore there was some falling off, but taking all districts together the increase in the past year was represented by 8,461 documents.

Comparatively speaking, however, recourse is had but to a small

Optional registration.

extent to registration as regards documents the registration of which is not compulsory. While the advantages afforded by the law cannot fail in time to be duly appreciated, still it would seem as if the expense and inconvenience

attendant on registration are held to outweigh them. Sir George Campbell's scheme for increasing the number of registration offices was meant to reduce this inconvenience as far as possible. Much must, however, always depend on the exertions and vigilance of inspecting officers, whose chief duty it is to see that no avoidable delay is allowed to occur in the transaction of business in registration offices, and that every facility is at all times afforded to the public. The introduction of printed forms of bonds, which have been drawn up after obtaining the best legal advice available on the subject, and which are now offered for sale at a mere nominal cost, will, the Lieutenant-Governor hopes, tend materially to encourage the registration of these documents.

Taking documents of all kinds, the net increase in registrations effected in the past, as compared with the previous year, was 36,287 documents, or 8·6 per cent. Fourteen districts show a decrease, against eleven in the previous year. In Rajshahye and Bhagulpore this is attributed to the famine having caused an increase in transactions in 1874-75. In Monghyr and Gya the decrease has been equally marked, and no explanation of the fact has been offered. The rapid increase in the number of documents registered, on the other hand, in certain districts of Eastern and Central Bengal, is a matter for congratulation. The arrangements made in Jessore exemplify what the Lieutenant-Governor would wish to see carried out elsewhere. Rural offices have been freely opened out in this district, with the result that in the course of three years the number of deeds registered has more than trebled, the increase being very marked in all classes of documents.

The increase in the number of registrations effected has necessarily resulted in a large accumulation of records. In noticing the difficulty which had hitherto been experienced in meeting demands for improved record-rooms, the Lieutenant Governor in last year's Administration Report expressed a hope that provision would be made in the budget of the ensuing year for the execution of the works which were of the most pressing necessity. It is not clear exactly what progress has been made in completing the several buildings which are mentioned as having been taken in hand. The Lieutenant-Governor gathers, however, that a considerable portion of the liberal budget grant which was allotted remained unspent. In future years steps will be taken to utilize to the utmost the funds which may from time to time be granted. Even pressing requirements have yet to be met in many districts, and in justice to the public it is essential that the proper security of the records should be fully provided for.

The number of prosecutions instituted for offences under the Registration Act during the year was 33 only.

Prosecutions. Twenty-nine cases were brought to trial with 79 defendants, of whom 14 were acquitted and 65 convicted. So far as can be gathered from these figures, the results are not unsatisfactory, though, considering the nature of the offences which are said to have been established, some of the sentences imposed appear to have been very light. Only seven registered documents were reported as having been discredited by the civil courts during the year, but apparently no prosecutions were instituted in any of these cases. From the remarks

made it would seem that the cases reported were only incidentally brought to the notice of District Registrars, and that others may have occurred of which they received no information. It is important, for the maintenance of the integrity of the Registration Department, that every case of this nature which occurs should be promptly reported, with a view to steps being taken for the institution of criminal prosecutions for forgery, false personation, or other fraud, as the case may be, against the offenders; and the Hon'ble Judges of the High Court have been moved to issue instructions to the officers presiding over the civil courts to bring the matter to the immediate notice of the local District Registrars whenever a document purporting to have been registered is discredited. The attention of all District Registrars has also been drawn to the subject.

A compilation of the departmental circulars has been undertaken by Mr. Gillon, the Inspector of Registration Offices. This very necessary work, when completed, will, it is hoped, aid in securing regularity in the proceedings of the several local offices.

Municipal Administration.

THE Bill for the consolidation and amendment of the Municipal Acts of Calcutta, which was before the Bengal Legislative Council, and alluded to in last year's report, has now been passed into law. This law has introduced a change in the constitution of the Calcutta Municipality. The old corporation has now ceased to exist, and the Justices of the Peace have been replaced by a body of Municipal Commissioners, who have been partly elected and partly appointed by Government. The Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to municipalities in the mofussil has also been passed during the year. The new Bengal Municipal Act also provides for the introduction of the elective system, which will lead to a more economical and impartial administration of Municipal Funds. This law, while it contemplates no increase of taxation, empowers the Commissioners of Mofussil Municipalities to expend Municipal Funds in the execution of many useful works, according to the requirements of circumstances, which could not be carried out under the law formerly existing. The Calcutta and Bengal new Municipal Acts did not, however, come into operation until after the close of the official year 1875-76.

During the year under review Sir Stuart Hogg continued to hold the administration of the Calcutta Municipality as Chairman of the Justices. The services rendered by him have been conspicuous, and have conduced to the true interests of the people. Unfortunately the harmony which distinguished the deliberations of the Justices and their relations with the Chairman during 1874 was not maintained in 1875. On several questions the Chairman failed to obtain the support of the Justices, and differences ensued, which caused some friction and delay in the disposal of business. It must, however, be admitted that the town of Calcutta is largely indebted to the exertions of the Justices for the great and marked improvements which they have initiated and carried out. The advance which has been made during the past twelve years in every department under the control and management of the Justices has been rapid, and attended with the best results; and the town of Calcutta at the present day will bear comparison with the other large cities of the world.

The financial results of the administration of the past year have been highly satisfactory. The total ordinary income of the Municipality amounted to Rs. 29,21,739. Of this sum Rs. 20,55,885 were realized from the rates levied on houses

New Municipal Laws.

CALCUTTA MUNICIPALITY.

Finance.

and landed property, and on account of police, water, and lighting. The receipts on account of licenses on professions, trades, and callings amounted to Rs. 2,54,083, and those from taxes on carriages, horses, carts, and hackeries to Rs. 1,57,960. The balance, Rs. 4,53,811, was made up of miscellaneous items, such as fees, rents, conservancy, slaughter-houses, and market receipts, &c. The extraordinary receipts amounted to Rs. 6,55,201, and consisted of the following items:—

	Rs.
Loan from Government for extension of drainage ...	8,70,000
Miscellaneous	24,122
Contributions from revenue for new work ...	44,598
Ditto ditto for repayment of market loans ...	55,436
Store and suspense accounts... ..	1,61,045
Total ...	<u>6,55,201</u>

Thus the total amount at the disposal of the Justices during the year, including the balance of the previous year, was Rs. 40,82,152, as shown below:—

	Rs.
Ordinary income	29,21,739
Extraordinary income	6,55,201
Balance of previous year	5,05,212
Grand total ...	<u>40,82,152</u>

The revenue of the year was more than 2½ lakhs in excess of that of 1874. The principal heads under which an increase is shown are house, lighting, police, and water rates, and market receipts. The increase in the receipts under the house and police rates is partly accounted for by the increase of ½ per cent. in the assessment under each head during the year, and partly by the revision of the valuations of property. This revision also tended to an increase of the demand on account of lighting and water rates.

The ordinary expenditure amounted to Rs. 33,60,346, as follows:—

	Rs.
Interest on loans and contribution to Sinking Fund...	13,55,808
Establishment and contingencies	2,38,173
Conservancy	1,52,991
Roads	3,83,956
Lighting	2,23,550
Police	3,06,983
Water-supply	2,44,390
Otherwise spent	4,54,495
Total ...	<u>33,60,346</u>

The expenditure chargeable to capital amounted to Rs. 5,07,670, as follows :—

	Rs.
Drainage works	2,53,136
New market	36,956
Repayment of loans from Government	55,436
Office buildings, &c.	7,032
Suspense account	1,55,110
Total . . .	<u>5,07,670</u>

The total expenditure of the Municipality under both revenue and capital accounts thus amounted to Rs. 38,68,016. Deducting this sum from the total receipts, there remained at the close of the year under review a balance of Rs. 2,14,136, as shown in the margin.

Total receipts ...	Rs. 40,82,162
Total expenditure ...	38,68,016
Balance ...	<u>2,14,136</u>

The revision of the assessments over a large portion of the town of Calcutta was the most important measure of the year. The financial result was an aggregate annual increase of Rs. 1,42,395 to the municipal income. The total assessed annual value of houses, tenanted lands, and huts in Calcutta at the close of 1875 was Rs. 1,22,34,342, or Rs. 10,14,173 in excess of the recorded annual value on the 31st December 1874.

Arrangements have now been made for extending the drainage scheme, which, so far as it has been carried out, has done much to improve the sanitary condition of Calcutta. An estimate was submitted to the Justices by their Engineer during the year for the completion of the drainage works for the whole town, with the exception of a small portion at the extreme north of the city between Baug Bazar and the Canal, which was omitted in the estimates owing to certain difficulties which do not admit of its inclusion in the general scheme. The estimate amounts to Rs. 18,94,486, and on the application of the Justices a loan of Rs. 3,39,400 was granted to them by Government to enable them to proceed with the works. 41,742 feet of sewers were laid down during the year, at a total expense of Rs. 2,53,136. The complete scheme provides for 39 miles of brick sewers and 136½ miles of pipe sewers. Of these, 37½ and 37 miles respectively have been constructed. Up to the close of the year, the total cost of the drainage works has amounted to some 67 lakhs of rupees.

The principal work projected during the year in connection with the water-supply was the construction of four new filters at a cost of Rs. 1,45,000. These filters are intended to facilitate the delivery of filtered water during the rainy season, when, in consequence of the clogging of the filters by the silt held in suspension in the turbid water, the supply is ordinarily deficient. The Justices considered two schemes during the year for increasing the water-supply; firstly, for doubling the filtered supply, and secondly, for extending the unfiltered supply throughout the whole town. The cost of carrying out these schemes was estimated at

24 and 5 lakhs of rupees respectively. The Lieutenant-Governor has already approved of the determination which was arrived at by the Justices to construct the additional filters as a step towards the accomplishment of their object of ultimately doubling the supply of filtered water in preference to the alternative project for extending the unfiltered supply. It has been brought to notice that there is a continued waste of water by all classes of the community. The new law now empowers the Municipal Commissioners to exercise better control in this particular, and to check all wilful and habitual waste, and it is to be hoped that its provisions will be found sufficient for this purpose. The working expenses connected with the water-supply amounted to Rs. 1,84,061, and have been considerably reduced as compared with those of the previous year. This is chiefly owing to the great saving which has been effected in the consumption of coal. It is satisfactory to know that the water supplied during 1875 was purer than usual, and that a comparison between the water supplied by hydrants in Calcutta and that supplied by the Southwark and New River Companies in London has proved the marked superiority of the former.

During the whole of the past year the conservancy establishment of the town has been under the control of the
 Conservancy and road- Engineer. The town has been divided into two making divisions, each under a Superintendent, and it is gratifying to learn that the new system of undivided responsibility in the management of this important department has worked satisfactorily. The net cost of the conservancy establishment for the year was Rs. 1,12,940. The cost of repairing the roads in 1875 amounted to Rs. 3,83,956, which exceeds the expenditure of any previous year since 1866. It is reported that in consequence of the increased traffic in the streets owing to the establishment of the Port Commissioners' Jetties and the opening of the Hooghly Bridge, a smaller sum will not suffice for the ensuing year. The cost of stone is also said to have greatly increased owing to the competition for the ballast brought by ships from China, Mauritius, and Bombay. The estimate for 1866 has, however, been reduced to Rs. 3,00,000, and it is hoped that this will not require to be exceeded.

During the year private parties were invited by advertisement to lay lines of rail through the principal streets of Calcutta, and to work the tramway for the term of 15 years, subject to certain conditions, but not a single offer was received. The Lieutenant-Governor has caused the Justices to be informed that they have no claim to compensation on the Government of India on account of the failure of the tramway.

The necessity of improving the sanitary condition of the bustees or clusters of Native huts, which are to be found throughout all parts of the town, has engaged the anxious attention of the Lieutenant-Governor during the year. The new municipal law now empowers the executive authorities to insist on proper arrangements being made for the sanitation and conservancy of these bustees, so as to obviate risk of disease to the inhabitants themselves, and to those living in the neighbourhood. The cost of the reforms required in each bustee if the measures taken

are effectual and sufficient will no doubt be large, and no rapid progress in carrying out improvements can be hoped for without the hearty co-operation of the leading proprietors of the land. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to observe the public spirit and liberality displayed by Baboo Subuldas Mullick in adopting measures for the improvement of the Mirzapore bustee. He has already expended a large sum on the construction of roads and drains, and it is hoped that he will not relax his public-spirited undertaking until he has completed the good work which he has begun.

The number of municipalities of the several grades in the interior of Bengal at work during the year was as follows :—

MUNICIPALITIES IN THE INTERIOR OF BENGAL.

Act XXVI of 1850	...	...	...	2
" XX " 1856	...	...	...	71
" III " 1864	...	...	...	24
" VI " 1868	...	...	...	95
Total				192

There has been an increase to the number of municipalities of all grades except those under Act III of 1864, which is apparent in the above figures, as compared with those furnished in last report. The increase was caused by the conversion of the unions of Nulchitty and Jhalokatty into towns under Act VI of 1868, and the establishment of six unions under Act XX of 1856—namely, Perozepore and Patuakhally in Backergunge, Tangail and Mooktagacha in Mymensingh, Mohnar in the district of Mozufferpore, and Julpigoree. Act VI of 1868 also came into operation in the town of Madareepore, in the district of Furreedpore, and in the town of Chyeabassa. Act XXVI of 1850 was introduced into the town of Sahibgunge only from the 1st January 1876, and was not in full operation throughout the year. An attempt was made during the year to extend Act XX of 1856 to the Moonsheegunge sub-division, but there were legal difficulties in the way, the place being an agricultural village. The provisions of Act IV (B.O.) of 1873 for the registration of births and deaths were introduced within the limits of the municipalities of Monghyr, Bhagulpore, and Purneah. The provisions of section 34 of Act V of 1861 were also extended to the Kissengunge union, in the district of Purneah.

Constitution of committees.

The constitution of the committees appointed under the various Municipal Acts was as follows :—

Acts.	1875-76.			
	Europeans.	Natives.	Officials.	Non-officials.
Act III of 1864	194	240	175	259
" VI " 1868	177	814	269	723
" XX " 1856	13	416	18	410
" XXVI " 1850	11	8	2	12
Total	394	1,478	464	1,403

The above figures, compared with those which were given last year, show that there was some slight increase in the number of non-official and native members of committees during the year under review, though the difficulty of securing suitable persons to sit on the Municipal Boards still continues. As a rule, it is observed that the Municipal Commissioners and members of the town committees have evinced a fair amount of interest in offering useful suggestions for the improvement of the towns, and that they have worked with zeal and vigor. In some places, however, the attendance of both official and non-official members has been somewhat irregular. It is to be hoped that the new law will remedy this state of things.

It was stated in last year's report that proposals for extending the elective system to the towns of Burdwan and Kishnagurh had received the sanction of Government. The system, however, did not come in force in either of these towns till after the close of the year under review. For the town of Burdwan 12 gentlemen have been elected by the rate-payers to be Municipal Commissioners, and six official members have been appointed by Government, making the total number of Municipal Commissioners 18; while the number of Municipal Commissioners elected for the town of Kishnagurh has been 15, and that appointed by Government three, or 18 in all. The result of the working of the system in these towns will be noticed next year. The elective system has continued to work satisfactorily in the town of Serampore since it has been introduced there.

Income.

The receipts of the various municipalities, classed under the several heads, were as follows:—

	MUNICIPALITIES UNDER ACT III (B.C.) OF 1864.		Towns under Act VI (B.C.) of 1868.	Chowkeedari unions under Act XX of 1856.	Towns under Act XXVI of 1850.	Total.
	Suburbs of Calcutta and Howrah.	Towns in the interior.				
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Rate upon owners according to the yearly value of houses and lands owned by them.	3,58,846	3,75,021	.....	.....	.....	7,33,867
Tax upon occupiers of holdings within the town according to their circumstances and their property to be protected.	.....	.....	4,17,101	1,09,538	14,997	5,41,634
Tax upon carriages, carts, horses, and elephants.	29,810	35,336	.....	431	641	65,718
Fines and fees ...	8,405	11,878	4,107	871	255	25,014
Pounds, ferries, and tolls ...	11,332	1,16,638	20,603	941	160	1,52,272
Rent of houses, gardens, and markets belonging to municipalities.	718	23,090	8,282	1,646	35	33,771
Other sources, including grants from provincial funds.	2,11,949	57,288	27,361	8,341	771	3,05,690
Total ...	6,21,160	6,21,227	4,77,454	1,21,266	16,859	18,57,966

There was an increase under each of the first three heads, which comprise taxation proper, as compared with the receipts of the previous

year. The total increase under these heads amounted to Rs. 71,888; the figures being Rs. 13,41,219, against Rs. 12,69,331. The total income of all the municipalities also exceeded that of the previous year by Rs. 47,968. In the Suburban Municipality alone the total receipts of the year amounted to Rs. 4,34,396, which exceeded those of the previous year by Rs. 21,234. In the town of Chittagong a new tax was levied from the owners of bullock-carts, under the provisions of section 49 of Act III (B.C.) of 1864. In some other towns the assessment was revised, which led to an increase to the total amount of the income. The revised assessment in Nusseerabad, in the district of Mymensingh, which resulted in a small increase of income, amounting to Rs. 100, however, lightened the burden of those who had been overtaxed, and increased the assessment of those who had been inadequately taxed, and thereby a fairer distribution of the burden was effected. In Naraingunge, in the district of Dacca, the rate of tax was increased with the view of meeting the cost of the maintenance of a dispensary and school, both of which are much needed for the town people. A revised assessment of the holdings throughout the town of Serampore was also made during the year, which resulted in increasing the house-tax by Rs. 1,300. The revision of the house assessments in the town of Dacca, which was kept in abeyance until the passing of the new law, will, it is said, now be at once taken in hand, and it is to be hoped that with the increased value of house property, as compared with what it was some years ago, the result will be a considerable addition to the municipal income.

The following table shows the several heads under which expenditure was incurred in the municipalities of the various classes respectively:—

	MUNICIPALITIES UNDER ACT III OF 1864.			Towns under Act VI of 1868.	Chowkeedari unions under Act XX of 1866.	Towns under Act XXVI of 1860.	Total.
	Suburbs of Calcutta and Howrah.	Municipalities in the interior.	Total.				
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Establishments ...	72,195	61,690	1,33,885	61,039	15,091	2,590	2,18,305
Police ...	93,614	1,64,999	2,58,613	1,35,801	63,641	3,635	5,21,690
Conservancy ...	1,44,749	1,24,157	2,68,906	48,407	9,643	3,649	3,30,505
Roads ...	1,71,821	1,32,132	3,03,953	99,355	13,951	5,499	4,21,763
Buildings ...		15,708	15,708	1,420	2,712	.....	19,840
Works of public-utility.	73,528	50,243	1,23,771	28,764	1,117	.....	1,51,652
Miscellaneous and contingent charges.	98,079	77,077	1,75,156	33,555	9,376	1,127	2,19,014
Total ...	6,53,986	6,26,006	12,79,992	4,65,141	1,16,481	16,190	18,77,754

The above figures show a total expenditure of Rs. 18,77,754 during the year, against Rs. 18,02,161 in the previous year; the result being an increase of Rs. 75,593 over the expenditure of the previous year. The increase is due chiefly to the addition which has been made in the number of municipalities during the year.

Marine.

Vessels of the Bengal
Marine.

THE number of vessels belonging to the
Bengal Marine during the year 1875-76 was as
follows:—

Sea-going steamers	...	...	...	2
Pilot-brigs, survey-vessels, light-ships, buoy-vessels, reserve pilot vessels, boats, &c.	...	...	...	26
River-going steamers	...	...	...	7
Flats and barges	...	...	...	9
Steam launches	...	...	...	2

There are also six famine steamers and 16 flats. The pilot-vessels and floating light-vessels are in good condition. Of the six pilot-brigs, four are at present doing duty in the pilot service, the remaining two having been lent to the River Survey Department and to the Sea Survey Department for service. The pilot vessel *Guide*, which was made over to the Sea Survey Department, has since been condemned and recommended by the Master Attendant to be sold. Of the five light-vessels, one, named *Comet*, was condemned and sold during the year; but she has been replaced by a new vessel of the same name, launched from the Government dockyard in Calcutta. A spare light-vessel is being built in England for the river Hooghly.

Under section 3 of the Indian Merchant Shipping Act, 1875 (No. IV of 1875), the Master Attendant was appointed in Calcutta, the Conservator in Chittagong, the District Magistrate at Balasore, the Conservator of the Orissa Ports at False Point, and the District Magistrate at Pooree, to be the officers for those ports who will receive notice of accidents to ships for communication to the local Government. Under section 5 the Conservator of the port of Chittagong was invested with power to institute, in the principal court of ordinary criminal jurisdiction at Chittagong, charges of incompetency or misconduct on the part of any master, mate, or engineer of any ship who holds a certificate granted by the Board of Trade, or as to shipwreck or other casualties affecting ships. The attention of the High Court was also invited to section 16 of the Act, but that Court was of opinion that it was not necessary at present to prescribe any rules under that section. In accordance with the provisions of sections 25 and 26, the existing form of agreement between masters and seamen has been revised and submitted for the approval of the Government of India.

Action taken on the
passing of the Indian
Merchant Shipping Act,
1875.

The new Indian Merchant Seamen's Act (No. XIII of 1876),

The Indian Merchant Seamen's Act, 1876.

which received the assent of the Governor-General in Council on the 29th June 1876, embraces all the provisions of the Bill to amend the law relating to merchant seamen, which was mentioned in last year's report as under the consideration of the Governor-General in Council. The Act further amends sections 54 and 70 of Act No. I of 1859. Under sections 3 and 5 of the Act, the Shipping Master has been appointed in Calcutta, the District Magistrate in Chittagong, the Conservator of the Orissa ports at False Point and in the Balasore ports, the Collector of Sea Customs, Balasore, in the Balasore ports, and the Collector of Pooree in the Pooree ports, to be the officers for those ports who will certify as to whether seamen are distressed, and who will prohibit, by order in writing, any person from engaging any native of India to serve as a seaman on board any ship specified in such order. Under sections 4, 6, and 8, the Shipping Master and the Deputy and Assistant Shipping Masters have been appointed in Calcutta, the Conservator in Chittagong, the Conservator of the Orissa ports at False Point, the Collector of Sea Customs, Balasore, in the Balasore ports, and the Collector of Pooree in the Pooree ports, to be the officers for those ports who will sanction the discharge of, and receive reports as to the desertion or absence of, seamen or apprentices not shipped in British India, and who will sanction the engagement of natives of India to serve in the place of the said seamen or apprentices who may be imprisoned on complaints made by masters or owners of vessels.

The Native Passenger Ships' Act, 1876 (No. VIII of 1876), received the assent of the Governor-General on the 28th March 1876, but it has not yet come into operation. It repeals the Indian Council Acts Nos. XXV of 1859, XII of 1870, and XII of 1872.

The pilot service, which numbered 81 on the 31st March 1875, decreased during the year to 76, of whom six are licensed leadsmen, so that the number actually admitted as pilots is 70, which is the strength at which it is intended that the pilot service shall be maintained in future. Of the 70 pilots, 49 belong to the covenanted service and 21 are licensed pilots. Of the 49 service pilots, 37 were actually running, three were in command of pilot-brigs, five were on leave, two were under suspension, and two were employed on staff duty. The 21 licensed pilots were all actually running, making 58 pilots in all available for service on board the vessels entering and leaving the Hooghly.

On the 19th January 1876 the Lieutenant-Governor submitted for the consideration of the Government of India his proposals regarding the recruitment of the Hooghly pilot service. Those proposals were—

- (1) That the future constitution of the pilot service should be a Government and not a licensed service.
- (2) That there ought to be at least 20 (or perhaps 24) leadsmen apprentices in training for the pilot service, and that the service should be recruited from the training ships in England.

- (3) That the Secretary of State should be moved to send out ten young men this year, and five in each of the two following years, as leadsmen apprentices.

The above proposals were supplemented by a set of rules for the admission of these apprentices into the pilot service, and a paper showing the position and prospects of that service.

To meet present requirements, five young men have been selected in this country for admission into the service as licensed leadsmen. Subsequently, a scheme for the completion of the reorganization of the pilot service was laid before the Supreme Government. The questions to be determined were—

- (1) The grading of the pilot service, and the allotment of tonnage to the different grades.
- (2) The reduction of the gross pilotage dues by 15 per cent., and a corresponding increase in the amount of port dues.
- (3) The future constitution of the pilot service, and the system upon which it shall be recruited.

The other questions upon which orders had before been passed, but which were not considered as finally settled, were—

- (1) The abolition of the grade of brevet branch pilot.
- (2) The raising of the command allowance for pilot-brigs to Rs. 400 per month, and making it compulsory upon all members of the branch pilots' grade to take command of a brig when ordered to do so.
- (3) The reformation of the present system of applications for special pilots by masters of vessels.

The following statement shows the number and tonnage of the

Arrivals and departures
of vessels.

vessels which entered and left the port of Calcutta during the last two years:—

1874-75	...	Arrivals	927	Tonnage	1,280,604
1874-75	...	Departures	961	"	1,321,993
Total		...	1,888		2,602,597
1875-76	...	Arrivals	914	Tonnage	1,274,944
1875-76	...	Departures	906	"	1,284,321
Total		...	1,820		2,559,265

This shows a decrease both in the number of vessels and in the gross tonnage, which is attributed to the depressed condition of trade during the year. But though the number of vessels visiting the port has for some years past shown a steady tendency to diminish, the tonnage in 1875-76 was greater than in any previous year, with the exception of 1874-75. It is also to be observed that the decrease during the year was entirely in steamers, the number and tonnage of sailing vessels showing an increase when compared with the preceding year. The average tonnage of steamers exhibited an increase, but there was a decrease in the average tonnage of sailing vessels. The figures of total

and average tonnage for the two years, distributed between steamers and sailing vessels, are as follow :—

	1874-75.	1875-76.
Number of steamers	920	811
Ditto of sailing vessels	908	1,009
Total tonnage of steamers	1,598,496	1,454,264
Average tonnage of steamers	1,737	1,793
Total tonnage of sailing vessels	1,004,101	1,105,001
Average tonnage of ditto	1,105	1,095
Ditto of steamers and sailing vessels	1,423	1,406

The question of the necessity of establishing a system for the survey of cargo vessels of the mercantile marine was laid before the Government of India so far back as the year 1873, and again in 1875, and was referred to (among others) as one which called for immediate legislation. That Government, however, in passing the Bill which afterwards became Act IV of 1875, did not provide in any way for legalizing the survey of such vessels.

At the instance of the Government of India the question was revived in December 1875, and it has now been suggested by the Lieutenant-Governor that the provisions of the 1st, 2nd, and 4th sections of the English Merchant Shipping Act of 1875, which authorizes the survey of unseaworthy vessels, should be extended to British India with certain modifications. While submitting these suggestions, Sir Richard Temple has taken the opportunity of remarking that the English Act of 1875 was only a temporary measure; that another Bill on the subject was then before Parliament, and would probably become law during the current session; and that he would be strongly in favour of having a similar measure passed for Calcutta, where it is probably as much needed as in any other part of Her Majesty's dominions.

During the year there has been no material deterioration of the navigating channels of the river Hooghly.

Channels of the Hooghly, and the Hooghly survey service.

Under instructions from the Government of India a committee was appointed to report upon the Hooghly survey service, and the necessity for a professional survey of the entire bed of the river. They have now submitted their report. Their proposals are—

- (1) The substitution of steam for sailing vessels which are at present employed in the river survey.
- (2) The appointment of a River Conservator to take charge of the following branches of the Marine Department :—
 - (a) The River Survey Department with its various duties.
 - (b) The light-houses and light-vessels of the river and its approaches.
 - (c) The houses of refuge on the sea-face of the Sunderbuns.
 - (d) The Wreck and Anchor Department.
- (3) To divide the survey of the river into two sections, viz. one from Diamond Harbour to the Sandheads, including the James-and-Mary Sands, and the other from Diamond Harbour upwards as far as the survey may extend.

(4) To make a scientific survey of the river from Diamond Harbour to Nuddea.

To carry out the above proposals the committee recommend two sets of establishments—one temporary, the other permanent; the former at a cost of Rs. 1,45,126 a year, to be entertained from the 1st November 1876, to meet present requirements, the latter (or permanent establishment), at a cost of Rs. 1,31,556 a year, to be employed when the vessels required for the service have been constructed, and the primary scientific survey of the river has been completed.

The annual cost of the present river surveying establishment is Rs. 1,28,276, so that the cost of the permanent establishment now proposed by the committee exceeds that of the present establishment by only Rs. 3,280 a year.

The report is under the consideration of the Lieutenant-Governor.

The Board of Trade have at length agreed to recognize the certificates of competency which are granted in this presidency to masters, mates, and engineers of vessels, on condition that the revised examination

Certificates of competency.

rules are further amended in accordance with their instructions. Her Majesty, by an order in Council, dated the 27th June 1876, has also been pleased to extend to the presidency of Bengal the provisions of section 8 of the Merchant Shipping (Colonial) Act, 1869. The revised examination rules, however, have not yet been adopted, owing to certain certificate and examination forms, which were asked for as patterns from the Board of Trade, not having been received. At the same time a qualified Board of Examiners has been appointed for the purpose of conducting the examinations of masters, mates, and engineers.

There were 45 cases of grounding during the year, as compared with 49 last year. In 43 cases no damage whatever was done. The number of collisions increased from six to seven, but in only one case there was considerable damage. The general conduct of the officers of the pilot service was good, and it was not necessary to hold any marine court during the year. Departmental inquiries were made into four cases of grounding and two cases of collision. Two officers were, however, suspended by order of Government without being brought to trial.

Groundings and collisions.

The total number of certificates granted under Acts V of 1862 and I of 1868 was 117, being ten less than the number granted last year; and with the exception of four the whole were severally for periods of six months. Under the English Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 three vessels were registered, against ten in 1874-75.

Survey and registration of vessels.

Miscellaneous.

The Calcutta Shipping Office improved in its financial position during the year, and there was an increased demand for its assistance in shipping and discharging crews on board of vessels. The Government dockyard and steam-factory turned out, like last year, a considerable amount of work. The houses of refuge in the Sunderbuns were visited and replenished twice during the year, but complaints are still made of the stores being stolen, and the police have not been successful in checking these thefts.

In accordance with the provisions of section 6 of the English Merchant Shipping Act of 1867, the Inspector of Antiscorbutics examined and passed 3,849 gallons of lime juice during the year under review. The number of gallons passed last year was 3,921, which shows a decrease of 72 gallons in 1875-76. This decrease is accounted for by the fact that fewer emigrant ships had left the port during the year than in the preceding year, the figures for the two years being 43 in 1874-75 against 20 in the year under report. The 3,849 gallons passed during the year were disposed of as follows:—

			Gallons.
To emigrant ships	...	...	2,839
„ other vessels	...	...	858
„ Government dockyard	...	...	60
In hand	...	...	92
		Total	3,849

The financial position of the Calcutta Port Trust, from the date of its establishment up to the 31st March 1876, shows a grand total expended on new works of Rs. 62,25,546. To meet this expenditure, the Commissioners have received Rs. 46,93,684 from time to time as loans from Government, and have met the difference, or Rs. 15,02,468, from surplus revenue. The total profit received from the jetties and inland vessels' wharves has amounted to Rs. 18,76,957. Of this amount Rs. 17,73,999 has been expended on the construction of new works and on the repayment of Government loans, and the remainder, amounting to Rs. 1,02,958, is held as a cash balance and as provision for a reserve fund.

The principal works in progress during the year are as follows:—Pitching slope along the whole length of jetty enclosure in front of the export sheds, water-supply, including tank-house for watering roads and cleaning slope, extension of new river-side road from Aheerettollah Ghât to northern boundary of the port, with jetty and floating stage; tramway to connect the jetties and inland vessels' wharves with the Eastern Bengal Railway; new workshop; landing stage at Chandpal Ghât; new burning ghât at Neemtollah; Port Commissioners' office building, and 30-ton crane. A good commencement has been made of the new office building, but the 30-ton crane has not yet been placed in position. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to see it stated that the dredging operations continue to be successfully carried on, and that there was a depth of water at all the jetties, so that they were kept available for vessels throughout the year.

The income and expenditure of the jetties have been as follows:—

			Income.	Expenditure.
			Rs.	Rs.
1871-72	...	...	3,63,708	2,04,778
1872-73	...	...	4,09,440	2,43,911
1873-74	...	...	4,21,774	2,68,413
1874-75	...	...	4,82,983	3,39,997
1875-76	...	...	5,44,380	3,70,758

This statement shows very satisfactory progress. The question of night work at the jetties was brought forward during the year, and received a considerable amount of the time and attention of the Commissioners. It was finally decided that night work should be allowed whenever shed accommodation and the necessary establishments were available, and night work has constantly been resorted to by vessels in order to obtain quicker despatch than day work alone would secure. By working at night, vessels of between three and four thousand tons burden have lately discharged and loaded at the jetties in six days.

The income and expenditure of the inland vessels' wharves are as follows :—

				Income.	Expenditure.
				Rs.	Rs.
1871-72	...	...	...	1,98,456	46,013
1872-73	...	...	...	2,01,834	68,381
1873-74	...	...	...	2,16,755	65,646
1874-75	...	...	...	2,47,730	94,440
1875-76	...	...	...	3,00,727	1,50,564

The increase in receipts is entirely due to the tolls collected at the new wharves north of Aheeretollah Ghât. The largest income was derived from the following articles :—

				1874-75.	1875-76.
				Rs.	Rs.
Grains	...	...	...	39,411	63,008
Seeds, &c.	...	...	...	34,304	55,920
Jute, &c.	...	...	...	37,589	50,541
Building materials	...	...	...	22,684	14,537

The increase under all the principal items of traffic is satisfactory. An enormous quantity of traffic is consigned to these wharves. Since September last the Commissioners have assisted Government in the registration of the inland boat traffic by collecting all the tickets from boats arriving at the wharves and noting all boats coming without tickets. It was soon observed that a large number of boats came to the wharves from places below Hooghly (the lowest registering station on the Ganges), and were therefore not registered at all; and the Commissioners were asked to assist still farther in this matter by undertaking the registration of all boats arriving at their wharves without a registration ticket. The Lieutenant-Governor has conveyed his acknowledgments to the Port Commissioners for the efficient way in which this work has been carried out.

The income of the Harbour Department amounted in the past year to Rs. 4,30,551, the expenditure to Rs. 4,25,698. The number of sailing vessels entering the port of Calcutta, which has been steadily decreasing since the year 1870-71 up to 1874-75, shows this year an increase, 508 sailing vessels having entered the port during 1875-76, against 473 in 1874-75; the average tonnage at the same time being 1,083 as compared with 1,037 in the previous year. The number of steamers is 406 in the past year, against 454 in 1874-75 and 429 in 1873-74. The exceptional number of the two previous years is attributable to the large number of steamers arriving from Burma with rice for famine relief purposes. But the Lieutenant-Governor observes

from the following statement that the number of Suez Canal steamers entering and leaving the port is steadily increasing :—

YEARS.	ARRIVALS.			DEPARTURES.		
	Number.	Gross tonnage.	Average tonnage.	Number.	Gross tonnage.	Average tonnage.
1870-71	51	79,874	1,598	45	68,469	1,581
1871-72	87	156,583	1,709	78	144,924	1,859
1872-73	95	188,509	1,984	69	141,881	2,056
1873-74	118	266,960	2,282	96	221,683	2,309
1874-75	105	270,799	2,579	113	285,303	2,584
1875-76	145	360,586	2,486	130	335,670	2,582

Year by year there has been a steady increase in the number of Suez Canal steamers, but the increase in 1875-76, amounting to 40 steamers of nearly 90,000 tons burden, has been greater than in any preceding year.

The only considerable accident to shipping that occurred within the limits of the port jurisdiction is that which led to the total wreck of the ship *British Viceroy* while hauling into moorings on the 30th August 1875. The accident in this case occurred in consequence of disobedience of the port rules and unskilful handling of the vessel, and the Assistant Harbour Master in charge was dismissed the Commissioners' service by order of Government.

The services of the newly appointed Health Officer of the port are fully recognized by Government. This officer has brought to notice the need of a pure water-supply for the shipping in the port, and it is hoped that the Port Commissioners, in communication with the Municipality, will be able to make arrangements for meeting this want. The question is still under the consideration of Government, with reference to the monopoly of supply which the Port Commissioners apparently desire.

The Port Commissioners completed a resurvey of the port in 1874-75, and it was then proposed that a similar survey should be made of the navigable channels and the river banks between the lower boundary of the port and the Sandheads. This proposition has been referred by the Government of India for the consideration and report of a special committee. In connection with this matter, the question of the deterioration of the moorings between Prinsep's Ghât and Tolly's Nullah, which has occasioned some anxiety to Government, will also be disposed of.

The disbursements on account of the Hooghly Bridge during the year have been Rs. 1,72,458-5-0; the receipts have been Rs. 3,71,628-7-6. The details of management have been well administered by the Commissioners. It was desired by the Agents of the Inland Steam River Companies that the bridge should be opened more than twice a week for the passage of vessels up and down; but the Commissioners came to the conclusion that it would be inconvenient to the general public to allow more frequent openings for the passage of vessels. The Commissioners are about to purchase a ferry steamer on their own account for crossing passengers at such times as traffic over the bridge is interrupted. The Commissioners have also been in communication

with Government upon the subject of providing a tug steamer for the purpose of towing vessels through the bridge opening.

In last year's report it was mentioned that the Government of India had deferred to accord its sanction, till further information on the details of the proposition was submitted, to the application for an advance of Rs. 2,50,000 required for carrying out the proposed improvements in the ports of Orissa.

During the year the necessary information was supplied, and it was added that this Government was of opinion that the ports of Orissa should be arranged in three groups, viz. Cuttack, Balasore, and Pooree, with three sets of accounts; and that separate applications for loans for the three groups would be submitted as soon as the Port Trust Committees, which were then being formed to be entrusted with their control and management, would send in their respective proceedings and loan applications. Application has since been made for a reduced loan of Rs. 30,000 for the port of False Point, owing to there not being sufficient security to offer for the repayment of the loan which was originally applied for. The Rs. 30,000 now asked for will be expended on works of immediate importance, viz.—

	Ra.
Harbour Master's house	5,000
Customs officers' do.	1,500
Customs office	1,500
Jetty at Jamboo	500
Tanks and wells	500
Roads and drains	4,000
Clearing jungle	3,000
Store-shed	300
Filling swamps and hollows	5,000
Jetty at Hookeytolla	1,000
Revetment of foreshore	1,300
Improving boat creek	300
Plantations	1,000
	<hr/> 24,900
To be kept in reserve for any unforeseen increase in any of the items of the estimate	5,100
Total	<hr/> 30,000

No applications for loans for the Balasore and Pooree ports have been submitted, as the present income of those ports is reported to be such as will barely cover the current expenditure, so that there is no guarantee for the liquidation of the debt which it may be considered necessary to contract in the interests of those ports.

The following account shows the progress that has been made in the execution of the works which were sanctioned by the Government of India in 1874-75 for the improvement of the port of Chittagong. The completion of an iron screw-pile jetty and bonded warehouse is stayed pending the decision of Government on a scheme which has recently been submitted for consideration by the present Commissioner. Two pilot-cutters were built in the Government dockyard at Calcutta at a cost of Rs. 14,000.

They were despatched to Chittagong on the 28th December 1875, and are reported to be very fine boats, quite suited to the purposes for which they are intended. The cutters did signal service lately in rescuing a number of passengers from board the steamer *Kurrachee*, which was for a time considered as lost, having struck on Daprie's Shoal, 50 miles off the mouth of the river Kurnafoolee. The construction of a buoy-vessel at a cost of Rs. 25,000 has been kept in abeyance for the present, as it is found that a vessel of about 90 tons burden cannot be built for that amount. The remaining sanctioned works are—a new Light for Kootubdea, and removal of the present Light to Norman's Point, and protective works for Kootubdea Lighthouse and Norman's Point Beacon. Rs. 9,279 have been expended on protective works at Kootubdea, and Rs. 2,832 have been spent in throwing up rubble revetments for the protection of Norman's Point Beacon. In all the sum of Rs. 12,111 has been expended out of the amount of Rs. 43,800 sanctioned for the carrying out of these works.

The scheme submitted by the present Commissioner and referred to above proposes the abandonment of the projects of a screw-pile jetty and a bonded warehouse, and the appropriation of the money set aside for those works to the opening up of the Moishkally canal at Chittagong. These proposals are under the consideration of the Lieutenant-Governor.

In July 1875 the Lieutenant-Governor received a memorial from certain merchants of Dacca and Naraingunge, pointing out the disadvantages under which the commerce of Eastern Bengal laboured owing to the want of a properly constituted port in those districts, suggesting that Naraingunge might be made a port, and requesting that the Lieutenant-Governor would order the river Megna to be surveyed with the view of ascertaining to what extent it might be used by large ships and steamers. In accordance with this request, Mr. Laycock, the River Surveyor, was charged by Government with the duty of surveying the Megna.

On the 31st March 1876 he submitted his report. The results of his inquiries appear to Sir R. Temple to show that the difficulties of the navigation are such as would probably deter ships from British ports from attempting to visit Naraingunge, even if it were thought expedient to declare that place a port. It would seem that the facts ascertained by Mr. Laycock indicate Chittagong as the most convenient port for the shipment of the produce of the eastern districts, the produce being sent down the Megna to Chittagong in flats towed by light draught river steamers.

Of all the products of Lower Bengal, rice alone finds its way to Chittagong, and the export trade of the place is only active during the rice season, a period of about six months in each year; and unless other produce can be attracted there, such as jute, oil-seeds, or hides, the trade cannot be expected to expand. The rice trade, moreover, has been decreasing during the last four years. In 1872-73 the exports were 103,711 tons; in 1873-74, 71,686 tons; in 1874-75, 45,072 tons; and in 1875-76 only 26,335 tons. In the interests of Chittagong itself, therefore, it is of importance to open up and improve its means of

communication with other ports of Bengal, and an application is now before Government, strongly recommended by the Commissioner, urging that facilities may be afforded for encouraging a jute trade between Naraingunge and Chittagong. But at present the jute of Naraingunge finds its way to Calcutta for the most part along the Eastern Bengal Railway; and although the situation of Chittagong and its accessibility for shipping doubtless point out that port as being naturally a very important trading centre for Eastern Bengal, the proposal that Government should encourage the trade between Naraingunge and Chittagong by special assistance involves a consideration of other interests which it is possible may conflict with those of Chittagong. The Lieutenant-Governor can only say that, as far as circumstances will justify his doing so, he will fairly consider the claims of Chittagong and the expressed desire of some of the most influential merchants of Naraingunge to be able to open out a trade with the sea-port that is nearest to their place of business.

IV.—PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION.

Weather, Crops, and Prices.

GENERALLY speaking, the harvests of Bengal during 1875-76 were favourable. The autumn crops everywhere were excellent. The winter rice crop and the spring crops were good in Orissa, in Eastern Bengal, in Central Bengal, and in Chota Nagpore, with the exception of a part of the Hazareebagh district. In the districts of these divisions the great rice crop of the winter yielded at least a fair average outturn, and perhaps more. 'The same remark applies to the districts of Bogra, Pubna, Rajshirahve, Maldah, and to the greater part of the Cooch Behar Division, all included in Northern Bengal, to the Sonthal Pergunnahs, and south of the Bhāgulpore district, and to the districts of Patna, and to the greater part of the districts of Gya and Shahabad, all included in Behar. There was, however, a failure of the rice crop over a considerable area of North Behar, especially in the north of the Durbhunga and Sopoool sub-divisions; and in the Dinagopore district of Northern Bengal the rice outturn was eventually much below an average. Relief works were found necessary in Behar during several months, but fortunately the authorities were able at a very small expense to meet the pressure put upon them, and to avert distress. In Dinagopore no relief works were necessary. The rainfall of the principal stations in Bengal where observations were taken is given in statement I.A.3 of the Appendix. A brief account is given below of the results of the harvest, of prices, and of the condition of the people during the year in the different divisions of the province.

The rainfall was average in the districts of the Burdwan Division, and on the whole seasonable. In Burdwan there was a good deal of early rain throughout the district, but the rainy season began late everywhere except in Cutwa and Culna. The rains ceased early, and there was a singular absence of rain throughout the cold-season. In Bankoora the rainfall was slightly below the average, but the supply came when it was wanted. In Beerbhoom the season was an ordinary one. In Midnapore the weather was favourable, and the rainfall was distributed in

the best manner possible. The crops were on the whole abundant, and the year was almost the most favourable ever known. In Burdwan the outturn of harvest was average, and the rubbee crop did not turn out well. In Bankoora and Beerbhoom the rice and cold-weather crops were abundant.

Beyond a fall in the price of rice at the end of the rainy season, when it was apparent that the harvest would be good, there was no considerable fluctuation in prices during the year. The prices of food, on an average, were as follow :—

	Seers.		Seers.
Rice	20	Salt	9
Wheat	20	Ghee	2
Pulses	16	Oil	3 to 4

The prices of labour are the same as have been reported in the preceding year. The Collector of Burdwan remarks as a noteworthy fact that in spite of the great demand for labour in Raneegunge, the wages of unskilled labour there appear to be lower than those paid in Culna and Jehanabad.

In Midnapore it is said that ordinary labour in the east of the district is 10 pice per diem, while in the jungle mehals it is not more than five or six pice. Four pice and a meal is very frequently the rate at Bogree. On the other hand, at Kharar, a large manufacturing town near Ghatal, a labourer earns from 12 to 24 pice per diem.

It is remarked that the relief which the plentiful harvest of 1875 brought the cultivators was to some extent counterbalanced by the low prices they got for their crops; and it is added by Sir William Herschel, the Collector of Hooghly, that the depreciation of silver has had no appreciable effect on the prices of food and labour in that district. This statement corroborates the observations that have been made in other parts of Bengal; but it is a circumstance calculated to excite some surprise that there should have been no rise in prices in a metropolitan district like Hooghly, which is more than ordinarily affected by Calcutta influences. The Lieutenant-Governor has noted also the following remarks recorded by the same Collector regarding the material condition of the people :—"I see," writes Sir W. Herschel, "no general mark of material improvement in the condition that the people enjoyed twenty years ago: the number of good houses and of puoka buildings has, however, certainly increased among, and more clothes are worn by, all classes above the labourer or agriculturist. Well-fed cattle are more common, but starved ones decidedly more scarce than they used to be. Milk is now so valuable that calves have little chance of growing; grazing-lands are few, and the Cattle Trespass Law is strong." The truth appears to be that Hooghly, more than the 24-Pergunnahs even, or any other district, has become as it were the suburban settlement of Calcutta, and that the densely-populated villages all along the banks of the river for more than twenty miles north of Howrah are peopled with a well-to-do metropolitan population, who are increasing in comfort and prosperity; while farther in the interior the increase in population and in the demand for food has put pressure on the cultivators, who have been gradually compelled to place even the worst soil under the plough, and are, as was clearly

shown in the recent inquiries that were made, far inferior in material condition and prospects of improvement to the ryots of the eastern and north-eastern districts of these provinces. In parts of the Burdwan Division, such as Midnapore, the people have been in a very depressed condition, owing to the effects of the fever and to successive calamities of drought, inundation, and cyclones, but they have been fortunately much relieved by the good harvests of the past year.

The reports from the districts of the Presidency Division are generally favourable. In the 24-Pergunnahs the rainfall was not only plentiful, but distributed in a manner most advantageous to cultivation, and the result was a most abundant rice crop—a satisfactory contrast to the scarcity which prevailed in 1873-74 and the scanty crop of 1874-75. There were no severe storms of floods to mar the general prosperity of the agricultural classes. In Moorsshedabad the fall of rain in April was sufficient for agricultural operations, and on the whole a good average crop of early rice was obtained. The cessation of heavy falls of rain before the end of September caused some apprehensions of a failure of the late crop; but light showers in October averted this calamity, and in the district, as a whole, a full average rice crop was obtained. The want of rain, however, affected the cold-weather crops, of which the yield was estimated as a nine or ten-annas crop. The yield of indigo was below the average, but the outturn of mulberry was very fair. In Nuddea the outturn of the rice crop seems to have been generally favourable, although there were some partial failures. The outturn of indigo throughout the district was below the average. In Meherpore it is reported that scarcely a single planter recovered his outlay. Owing to the early cessation of the rains the outturn of the rubber crop was, as a rule, below the average. In Jessore the weather throughout the district was most favourable to the growth of the rice crops. The rainfall, though comparatively scanty, was happily distributed, and the outturn of the rice crops was above the average. In indigo the seasonable showers with which the year commenced promised well, and hopes were entertained that a more than ordinary outturn would be secured; but these hopes were not destined to be realized. The heavy rains of July and August materially injured the plant, washing out the dye and reducing the outturn. In the native factories the plant was cut too late, and the result was very unsatisfactory.

The price of food was naturally lowered throughout this division, as the year was one of agricultural prosperity. At Alipore the price of rice ranged from 13 seers 10 chittacks per rupee in September 1875 to 17 seers in March 1876. The rate of wages at Alipore is the same as in Calcutta for domestic servants, unskilled labourers, and carpenters and blacksmiths. Women are largely employed at the jute factories, and also on earthwork. In the sub-divisions the price of rice and other articles of food varies according to the distance and accessibility of each locality from the capital, and the same principle regulates the wages of labour. In Moorsshedabad the prices of the principal food-grains were low, and the markets well supplied during the year, which was due partly to the more abundant harvest of the year, and partly to a

portion of the surplus stock of 1874-75 being brought into the market. The statement given below shows the average monthly wages received by the various classes of artisans and labourers:—

				Rs.	Rs.
Common mason	...	...	...	6	to 7½
Carpenter	...	...	...	7	to 8
Blacksmith	...	...	...	7½	
Thatcher	...	...	...	5	to 6
Goldsmith	...	...	...	6	to 9
Silk-spinner, man	..	...	...	4	to 5
Ditto, woman	...	...	...	3	
Ditto, boy	...	...	...	2	to 3
Grass-cutter	...	...	...	3½	to 4
Syce	...	...	...	4	to 5
Able-bodied labourer	...	...	...	3½	to 5

In Nuddea the price of rice and other kinds of food-grains had become more moderate at the beginning of the year, and after some fluctuations it appears to have come to the normal standard of Re. 1 for 20 seers, or slightly less than that; but it must be remembered that 'common rice,' of which quotations are given in the official returns, is not generally the rice used by the cultivating classes, who usually eat coarse aous rice, the price of which is about one quarter less than that of the so-called 'common rice.' The prices of ghee, oil, and sugar, have risen during the year, and their prices are now rising again, because necessaries are cheap and people have money enough to spare for competition in procuring luxuries. There has been no perceptible change in the price of labour during the year under report. In Jessore it is stated that with the exception of a few articles of food there was a general fall of prices during the past year as compared with the preceding one. In the early part of the preceding year the price of rice was exceptionally high owing to the famine; and although it began to fall by the end of July, when the early aous crop was harvested, the average reached up to the end of the year did not exceed 12 seers a rupee. But in the past year coarse rice was sold from Re. 1-8 to Rs. 2 per maund, and the best sort did not fetch more than Rs. 2-8. The pulses were also sold at low prices. There was a marked depression in the price of goor and sugar, which considerably affected the trade in these important articles. The price of fish, oil, and salt, remained almost stationary, but the price of milk and ghee was high in some parts of the district owing to the prevalence of disease amongst the cattle.

It may be said that the material condition of the people is slowly and steadily improving, and that the past year has shown a fair degree of progress. Mr. Smith, the Magistrate of Jessore, makes the following interesting remarks regarding the material condition of the people in his district:—"Increased resort to our schools shows that education is advancing. Increases under the different heads of revenue show increasing wealth among the people. Increasing resort to our courts of justice

shows a growing knowledge of individual rights and the means of asserting and defending them. The rapid development of registration, and particularly of voluntary registration, shows an increasing want of greater security in respect of the title-deeds of property, and of good faith in commercial dealings; while the numerous calls for the construction and maintenance of roads show a growing necessity for improved means of social and commercial communications. On every side there are marks of moral and material progress." And again the same Magistrate writes:—"The largest and most important portion of the population is the cultivating class, in whose material comfort and social position there has lately been a marked improvement. The price of rice has risen, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the value of silver has fallen; and while the ryot gets a better return for his crops, his rent has not risen in proportion. The general rise of prices does not very materially affect him, for so long as he has rice to support himself and his family he does not much want anything else. The little garden attached to the compound of his house supplies him with vegetables, and the nearest river or pond yields him fish." In the Jessore district, however, it must be remembered that the people are generally better off than they are in other metropolitan districts. In the neighbouring district of Nuddea, for instance, there is no doubt that a widespread indebtedness prevails among the peasantry. In Moorsshedabad also the prosperity of the people is far less marked than it is in the eastern and deltaic districts of Bengal.

The Lieutenant-Governor has stated his belief that the depreciation in the value of silver has not yet affected the price paid for produce in the interior of the country; and though, no doubt, the lessened purchasing power of the rupee will ultimately influence favourably the position of the producer, whose wants are few and simple, it seems that the increased price of rice, which has been gradual for many years past, is due to intrinsic causes, such as pressure of population, a greater foreign demand, briskness of trade, and increased facilities of communication. In most parts of Bengal it was the case that during the past year, after a favourable harvest, the prices of food were lower than they had been for some years previous. Even when exchange was lowest the prices were lower than usual at the season of the year, and showed no tendency to rise. The absolute value of the rupee has fallen; but it cannot be said that this fall has yet been accompanied by any diminution of purchasing power, so far as the great staples of local consumption are concerned. The rise in the value of produce from this cause must, however, only be a matter of time, and the higher prices now paid in Calcutta must soon influence the prices paid in the interior at the large marts, and at last affect even the petty transactions between the local dealers and the cultivators themselves. From an economic point of view, it must always be interesting to trace the effect of the fall in the value of silver as it gradually diffuses itself in India; and the Lieutenant-Governor has expressed a hope that the attention of officers will continue to be drawn to the operation of this difficult, but most important, occult movement, which so vitally, and in so many ways, concerns the interests and welfare of the country.

The following statement shows the quantity of rainfall that was registered at the head-quarters of each district of the Rajshahye and Cooch Behar Division during the calendar year 1875, as well as the quantity of the average rainfall :—

				Rainfall in 1875.	Average rainfall.
Darjeeling	...	...	...	115·17	121·02
Julpigoree	...	...	...	106·59	127·55
Dinagopore	...	...	...	43·60	78·92
Rungpore	...	...	...	60·45	83·93
Maldah	...	...	...	54·40	53·33
Bogra	...	...	...	57·81	82·84
Rajshahye	...	...	...	49·00	58·59
Pubna	...	...	...	50·08	67·22

It will be seen that the rainfall was generally below the average, and this was especially the case during the critical months of September and October. In Maldah, Rajshahye, Pubna, and Darjeeling, however, a full average rice crop was reaped; and in Bogra and Julpigoree also there was a fair harvest. It was only in Dinagopore and Rungpore that, owing to the early cessation of the rains, the late rice harvest was a bad one; and in the northern part of Dinagopore the failure was so considerable, that for a time apprehensions were entertained that another period of scarcity was impending. The general outturn of other crops, however, especially of jute, was good. In Darjeeling, notwithstanding the early cessation of the rains, there was the enormous increase of 686,988lb in the manufacture of tea over the crop of the previous year; but this increase in quantity was, the Deputy Commissioner observes, obtained by a sacrifice of its quality, as is indeed a matter of notoriety among those interested in the tea industry.

The prices of the principal articles of food were universally high during the year of report in Dinagopore and Rungpore. The price of rice gradually rose from April to July, fell after the harvesting of the *aous* or *bhadoi* crop, rose again steadily from October to December, and fell again in January and very little in February, thus indicating the bad yield of the *amun* or *haimanti* crop. In the remaining districts, also, the price of rice was above the average, and it may be said generally that the price of this staple article of food has not yet returned to what it was prior to the scarcity of 1873-74.

There has been no variation in the rates of labour in Maldah, Rajshahye, and Pubna; in Dinagopore, Rungpore, and Julpigoree local labour of all kinds is very dear. The people are mostly agriculturists, and tolerably well off. They will only work for short intervals, when there is nothing to do in the fields. In Dinagopore the wages of coolies and artisans are said to have risen considerably of late years. In Rungpore and Julpigoree, especially in the latter district, domestic servants of

all kinds are procured with difficulty. They demand exorbitant wages, and are generally lazy and inattentive. In Bogra wages of labour are said to be as high or even higher than in the Presidency. This district is under-populated, so much so that men are with difficulty obtained to work on the roads, as has been already mentioned, and labourers for the State Railway had to be altogether imported. The wages of both skilled and unskilled labourers are high in Darjeeling.

The material condition of the people is described as being generally prosperous and progressive. The advances of grain made during the famine have been almost entirely recovered in Bogra; in Dinagore and in parts of Rungpore, where the people are poorer, and the harvests of the year were less plentiful, the recovery of the advances has been less steady and rapid. It is pointed out that in Rajshahye the rearers of the silk-worms, who have to pay high rates of rent for the land in which they grow mulberry, are suffering from the continued depression in the silk trade. On the whole, however, the people of this division may be said to be well off as compared with some parts of Bengal. The country is not over-populated, and there is no necessity for emigration. In some districts, like Dinagore, Julpigoree, and Darjeeling, there is waste land available for cultivation. The soil is fertile as well in the production of food-grains as in jute, sugarcane, tobacco, and other staples, which are largely exported into other districts and to Calcutta.

The rainfall throughout the Dacca Division was scanty and not favourably distributed. There was heavy rain in June and insufficient rain in October; but upon the whole

Dacca Division.

it appears that the outturn of the crops cannot be said to have been below the average. The rice was generally an average crop, and the cultivation of jute was not in any way affected by the unusual weather. In Backergunge the yield both of cocoanuts and betelnuts was fairly abundant. There was a serious flood in Tipperah in the early part of August, owing to the river Goomtee bursting its embankments in the vicinity of the sudder station. It was at one time apprehended that Commillah itself would be flooded, but energetic measures were adopted by the Magistrate, and the danger was averted. The early rice crop, however, which was just ripening, was completely destroyed throughout the area of the inundation, which extended over 250 square miles of country. In consequence of these floods a limited distress prevailed during May, June, and July last among the poorer classes, especially in the sub-division of Brahmunberiah. At this crisis it is reported that the zemindars all behaved well and were considerate to their ryots, especially Baboo Anoda Pershad Roy, Baboo Eshan Chunder Roy, and the Rajah of Hill Tipperah. Baboo Anoda Pershad Roy opened out five centres of relief operations, where rice and money were distributed to all deserving persons in need of relief. His agent was also directed to find out middle class families who, though feeling the pressure most keenly, would not resort to the relief centres, and to administer relief to them. An expenditure was incurred, amounting altogether to Rs. 2,300. The Lieutenant-Governor has taken the opportunity of suitably acknowledging the liberality of Baboo Anoda Pershad Roy, who has set a most excellent example to other zemindars—an example which was followed by others.

The table given below exhibits the prices of rice for the three past years in each district in the division :—

Name of District.	1873-74.			1874-75.			1875-76.		
	Srs.	O.	Srs.	Srs.	O.	Srs.	Srs.	O.	Srs.
Dacca	14	0 to 30	12	0 to 24	17	12 to 22	14	14
Furreedpore	13	8 to 25	12	5 to 21	17	0 to 24	0	0
Backergunge	14	14 to 28	12	0 to 20	14	8 to 18	0	0
Mymensingh	14	0 to 32	10	8 to 22	19	0 to 22	8	8
Tipperah	13	0 to 32	12	3 to 27	14	8 to 23	0	0

The above figures show that though prices were generally considerably lower than they were in 1874-75, they have not yet sunk to what they were in 1873-74. During the past year the price of ordinary common rice was highest in Dacca in June, 17 seers 12 chittacks; and lowest in February and March, 22 seers 14 chittacks, just after the *amun* crop came into the market: in Mymensingh highest in August, September, and October, 19 seers; lowest in May 1875 and March 1876, 22½ seers: in Furreedpore highest in June, 17 seers; lowest in October, 24 seers: in Backergunge highest in September, 14 seers 8 chittacks; lowest in February, March, and April, 18 seers: in Tipperah highest in August, 14 seers 8 chittacks; lowest in February, 23 seers. The high prices in this district in August were no doubt occasioned by the damage that had been done to the *acous* crop by floods just at that time.

There was but little variation in the price of labour during the year. Carpenters and blacksmiths earn from Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 a month; in Mymensingh the former earn from Rs. 15 to Rs. 18, the latter from Rs. 20 to Rs. 25; thatchers, Rs. 6 to Rs. 8; day-labourers, Rs. 5 to Rs. 7-8; bricklayers, Rs. 10 to Rs. 14; in Mymensingh from Rs. 15 to Rs. 18; boatmen, Rs. 5 to Rs. 8; tailors, Rs. 6 to Rs. 12; domestic servants, Rs. 5 to Rs. 10. These prices are in striking contrast with those in other parts of Bengal. They are certainly very much higher than those paid in the Patna and Chota Nagpore Divisions, where the price of unskilled labour is about 2 annas a day, or Rs. 3-12 a month; that of skilled labour from 3 annas to 6 annas per diem, or about Rs. 5-10 a month the lowest, and Rs. 11-4 a month the highest.

The material condition of the people in this Division is reported to be one of steady improvement. Mr. Lyall, the Magistrate of Dacca, writes:—"The condition of the ryots is excellent: they pay low wages, and are getting high prices for rice as well as for their other crops. Very nearly the whole of the benefit of the rise in price caused by the famine year is enjoyed by them, and the ryots of this part of Bengal are decidedly prosperous." In Furreedpore the people are not quite so well off as they are in Dacca. In Backergunge many of the ryots are said to be in debt, but "that they are so," writes Mr. Peacock, the Commissioner, "is entirely their own fault. With a soil of such wonderful fertility that it is by no means unusual for a single acre of land just touched by the ploughshare to yield 30 maunds of paddy; with a system of rivers and khals and channels that enable them either to sell the produce of their land to traders within a few yards of where it is grown, or to transport it themselves to the nearest market; and lastly, living in a district which, by reason of its

wonderful water system, is almost independent of the rainfall, and where consequently a failure of crops is almost an impossibility, and a bad harvest of the rarest occurrence, the ryot of Backergunge, if he is not well to do, has only himself to thank." The Lieutenant-Governor, however, trusts that in fact the indebtedness of the Backergunge peasantry is not so widespread as is stated. No doubt the system of advances is common, but it is believed that the debts incurred are rapidly paid off, and that the ryots as a community are far less involved in Backergunge than they are in less favoured districts nearer Calcutta. In Tipperah it is certain that the people are very well off.

The rainfall during the year 1875 was excessive, and the fall of

Chittagong Division.

August culminated in a flood both in Chittagong and in Noakholly, the like of which is said not to have been witnessed within memory. At the head-quarters of the Noakholly district 32 inches of rain fell during one week, from the 26th of July to the 2nd August, and for some period the water lay 15 feet deep over cultivated fields. The rivers became undistinguishable in the expanse of water, and boats passed and repassed everywhere across the flooded tracts. This flood was succeeded by a drought: a few showers fell in September, but the rest of the year was marked by an almost total absence of rain. The flood caused much injury to the early rice crops and other produce, and to houses and cattle, while the combined effects of both the flood and the drought damaged the prospects of the harvest. The season was thus a singularly unfavourable one, and there was not more than half an average outturn of rice throughout the Division.

It is satisfactory to observe that, notwithstanding these untoward circumstances, there was no complaint of distress from any part of the country. The people are described as being in a solvent and substantial position. Every man has either direct or indirect interests in land, and a fertile soil and high wages both at home and in the neighbouring labour markets of British Burmah render the condition of the cultivators and the lower orders of the people easy and prosperous. It is a custom with the agriculturists to store up two or three years' supply of food for their own maintenance before selling any portion of their harvests; and they have resources other than rice crops, such as the sale of betelnuts and cocoanuts from the trees around their homesteads, which provide them with sufficient means for ordinary expenses.

A table showing the average prices of the chief articles of food that ruled in the two districts of the Chittagong Division is given below:—

Articles of food.					Average price per maund.			
					Chittagong.		Noakholly.	
					Rs.	A. P.	Rs.	A. P.
Best rice	...	...	...	...	2	5 0	3	0 0
Common do.	...	...	...	...	2	0 0	2	3 0
Salt	...	...	...	...	5	0 0	5	5 0
Fish	...	...	...	...	5 to 10	0 0	0	0 0
Mustard oil	...	...	...	...	12	6 0	14	2 8
Chillies	...	...	...	...	8	8 0	10	0 0
Dal	...	Kulleye	...	...	3	11 0	4	9 4
		Muttur	...	...	4	8 0	3	12 0
		Mussoor	...	...	4	4 0	5	0 0

The prices at head-quarters, as usual, were slightly higher than in the interior of the district. In the sudder sub-division of Chittagong the price of common rice ranged at head-quarters from 17 seers to 21 seers per rupee, the general average price about 19 seers per rupee, while in the interior the average ranged between 19½ to 21 seers. It is reported that during the last three years the price of rice at the port of Chittagong, which used formerly to be always on an average four annas per maund cheaper than Calcutta prices, has become habitually four annas per maund higher than those prices. This state of things is particularly noticeable since the Behar famine of 1874; and during the last export season it became especially so, owing to the very indifferent yield of the year under report.

At the head-quarters of Cox's Bazar sub-division the price of rice was remarkably steady, varying from 25 to 22 seers per rupee, and compares favourably with the previous year—a fact which must be attributed to Cox's Bazar not having been affected by the floods of August or the drought at the end of the year. The prices at thanas Ukhia and Teknaaf, in the south of Cox's Bazar, were still more favourable, rice having sold there six or seven seers more per rupee than in thanas Ramoo and Cox's Bazar.

The price of common rice was highest in the district of Noakholly from July to September, partly owing to apprehension occasioned by the flood, and again during November, December, and March. The price rose, as the demand for export made itself felt more than usual, owing to the shortness of the harvest and the usual supplies not finding their way so readily to the market when the cultivators were busy with their fields.

In Chittagong the price of labour may be stated as follows:—

	Per month. Rs.		Per month. Rs.
1. Coolies ...	6 to 15	7. Serangas or dug-	
2. Carpenters ...	9 „ 25	outs ...	7½ to 45
3. Blacksmiths ...	8 „ 30	8. Ticca gharries ...	150 „ 180
4. Dhobis ...	6 „ 12	9. Carts of two bul-	
5. Sweepers ..	7 „ 10	locks ...	22
6. Boats with crew...	45 „ 280	10. Bearers ...	6 „ 8

Information from Noakholly is not so full:— •

	Per month. Rs.		Per month. Rs.
1. Carpenters ...	8 to 12	3. Manjees and crew ...	6 to 12
2. Masons ...	7 „ 12	4. Menial servants ...	6 „ 8

The prices have, with the exception of a temporary rise in the wages of day-labourers immediately after the flood, remained the same as in ordinary years, though, compared to what they were some fifteen or twenty years ago, they have doubled.

The year 1875 opened throughout the Patna Division with every prospect of plenty, but owing to a deficient and unfortunately-distributed rainfall the promise of the crops was not fulfilled, and the year closed with a failure of the winter rice harvest under circumstances of grave anxiety for the welfare of people. The average rainfall at the head-quarters of each district of

the Division, and the actual rainfall in 1875, are shown month by month in the following statement:—

MONTH.	PATNA.		GYA.		SHARABAD.		DUR- BHUNGA.		MOZUFFER- PORE.		SARUN.		CHUMPA- RUE.	
	1875.		1875.		1875.		1875.		1875.		1875.		1875.	
	Average.	Actual.	Average.	Actual.	Average.	Actual.	Average.	Actual.	Average.	Actual.	Average.	Actual.	Average.	Actual.
January ...	0.59	1.27	0.81	1.03	0.89	0.90	0.30	1.27	0.82	0.56	0.86	0.83	0.60	0.47
February ...	0.71	0.11	0.63	0.57	0.55	0.17	0.26	...	0.51	...	1.05	0.10	0.34	...
March ...	0.81	...	0.55	...	0.63	...	0.51	...	0.65	...	0.89	...	1.50	...
April ...	0.41	0.21	0.50	...	0.76	0.59	0.79	1.01	0.50	0.12	0.48	0.50	0.45	1.61
May ...	0.97	2.59	0.73	1.23	1.22	1.98	1.18	2.67	1.84	3.96	1.80	1.91	2.93	4.00
June ...	6.66	18.10	6.53	14.19	7.68	5.61	8.03	4.88	6.80	8.88	7.45	7.65	8.35	9.42
July ...	10.97	9.34	12.49	7.01	13.87	7.83	18.11	9.46	11.06	9.46	10.21	9.16	11.75	8.25
August ...	7.46	8.37	10.52	6.94	9.94	12.18	9.00	8.98	9.39	16.27	10.14	8.14	10.59	14.75
September ...	7.26	5.36	6.53	7.29	10.18	8.80	12.14	4.36	8.58	7.19	11.75	4.15	11.93	8.63
October ...	2.54	0.03	2.89	...	2.70	...	1.79	...	3.39	...	3.82	...	8.16	...
November ...	0.07	...	0.04	...	0.21	...	...	...	0.03	...	0.03	...	...	...
December ...	0.06	...	0.07	...	0.06	...	0.10	...	...	...	0.63	...	0.35	0.20
Total ...	38.01	45.38	42.59	38.25	48.70	33.06	50.20	32.61	43.37	45.82	48.72	32.44	56.80	47.93

Generally speaking, it may be said that there was a heavier fall than usual in May and June, but that during September and October the rainfall was deficient. It is the October rain that is essential to securing a good harvest. As far as the rice crop is concerned, the rains beginning about the 4th of October are the most important. In propitious seasons the clouds begin to gather at the latter end of September and about the 4th October a violent gale from the east sweeps over the whole of this Division, lasting from three days to a week. All business is generally suspended through the inclemency of the weather, and all classes watch the rainfall with interest. To the agriculturist it means a plentiful rice harvest and moisture for his cold-weather sowings; to the planter it bears the promise of a fair-coming indigo season; to the general public it means cheap grain; to the European it is the happy omen of an early cold-weather. In the several years 1873-74, 1874-75, and 1875-76, this rainfall has been deficient.

So early as November last there were apprehensions of short crops and general distress throughout North Behar. The rice crop was in many places reported to be a total failure, and it was estimated that the stocks of food-grain would require to be largely supplemented from other districts to meet the requirements of the people. At this time the permanent construction and extension of the Durbhunga Railway was sanctioned, and drew labour from all parts of North Behar, affording relief to thousands.

Subsequently Messrs. Geddes and MacDonnell were deputed on special duty to inquire into the apprehended scarcity, and these officers ascertained that although the failure had been great—almost total—in certain localities, yet that the area of failure was a limited one. Anxiety was gradually contracted from special tracts to individual

villages, and finally attention was centred upon the two sub-divisions of Seetamurhee and Mudhoobunnee.

In Seetamurhee the Assistant Magistrate had with praiseworthy activity turned out the labouring population along the banks of streams, and by banking up the waters had irrigated large areas of land, on which the villagers were not slow in sowing cold-weather crops. A little later and the holders of Indian corn in Nepal began to sell freely, and poured a large quantity of grain into the market; prices went down, the bazars became amply stocked with cheap grain, and the partial scarcity in the sub-division was relieved. An estimate of a seven-annas outturn of the rice crop for Seetamurhee was accepted by Government.

The north-east parts of Durbhunga, including pergunnahs Alapore and Narridigur, then alone claimed attention. In the case of these pergunnahs no favourable circumstances arose, and the fact was patent that while the crops had failed a large number of the people were in a condition of extreme poverty and destitution. The outturn of the rice crop was estimated at only five annas in this sub-division. With the approval of Government centres of observation were fixed, and the district officers continued on the alert, watching the signs of coming distress. In a quiet and unobtrusive manner arrangements were made to meet very extensive distress, should it arise. As a special measure the collection of rents in part of the Durbhunga estate was suspended. Not until the beginning of February was it found necessary to commence the administration of relief; but shortly after this time reports poured in, showing that the paupers of all the villages in the distressed pergunnahs were more or less on the verge of starvation. The relief offered was principally in the form of village charity to the sickly and weak; to a small extent employment was afforded on relief works—village roads, tanks, and the like. In the middle of May last, that is to say about the worst period of distress, Sir Richard Temple visited the affected tracts and found that distress, wherever manifested, had been promptly and efficiently relieved by the local officers. Although the early anticipations of the extent of the distress had, happily, not been realized, and although there was nothing like famine, nor even an approach to famine, anywhere, still there was real and undeniable suffering over a limited area of country among many thousands of persons, and the Lieutenant-Governor satisfied himself, by a personal inspection of the country, that the organization of relief measures was absolutely necessary to save life. He not only saw the people in a state of physical and mental depression, but he also found some depopulation and some abandonment of fields by reason of this second drought following so close on the traces of the famine. The executive arrangements for averting misery were, however, highly successful. The Lieutenant-Governor is glad to be able to say also that the financial results are satisfactory. It seems probable that the whole cost of the Government relief expenditure will be covered by Rs. 30,000, of which about Rs. 3,000 will be debitable to road funds and to private subscriptions. This is exclusive of the extensive relief afforded in the great estate of Durbhunga. Both Mr. Metcalfe, the Commissioner of the Division, and Mr. MacDonnell, the Magistrate of Durbhunga, are

entitled to credit for the manner in which they have successfully, and at the same time economically, organized the administration of relief.

The Lieutenant-Governor observes as a satisfactory symptom that the prices of food-grains have continued to be low all over Behar, notwithstanding adverse circumstances, and that even in places where the failure was greatest the prices have not been abnormal. There is little doubt that this cheapness of food is attributable to the prosperous harvests which were reaped in Bengal, and to the fact that such districts as Sarun, Chumparun, Monghyr, Gya, and also Nepal, about which uneasiness was felt, yielded an outturn very little, if at all, short of an average crop. There were thus resources available from which supplies were obtained through private trade for the tracts suffering from scarcity.

The recent scarcities seem, in fact, to have had no appreciable effect upon the price of labour. In Chumparun the wages are still from $1\frac{1}{2}$ anna to $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas for unskilled labour, besides a daily meal of parched gram. For skilled labour the rates are, for carpenters 3 annas to 4 annas per diem, thatchers $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas, plough 2 annas a day, with a meal of parched gram; the ploughing day consists of six hours. In Patna the price of labour remains at a stand-still. As regards the Durbhunga district, it is said that labourers are louder and more persistent in their complaints of the insufficiency of the prevailing rates, which do no more than enable them to keep body and soul together. Marked stress has been laid on the hard treatment by the Bengali contractors working on Raj. works of their coolies. The matter is still under inquiry. The wages of skilled labour has, in consequence of the railway works, risen considerably; the supply is quite unequal to the demand—a demand which it is hoped the industrial school at Patna will some day be able to supply. The minimum rates for skilled labour are—

	As.		As.
Smiths	3	Bricklayers	3
Carpenters	3	Sawyers	3
		As.	
Brickmakers	2		

Labour in Shahabad is ordinarily paid in grain. There is, however, a custom to engage ploughmen for the season, who are remunerated by receiving one beegha of land rent-free. Ploughing by the day is paid for at the rate of three seers of grain per diem; for weeding, four seers of grain are paid; for reaping, one bundle out of every 20, i.e., equivalent to five seers of grain on $20\frac{1}{2}$ maunds. Skilled workmen realize from 3 annas to 4 annas per diem; coolies, 2 annas; carts from 6 annas to 8 annas per diem. In Gya the agricultural labourer receives from $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas to 3 annas per diem, and in harvest one bundle in every 10. In Sarun prices vary in town and country by about half an anna, and a labouring man earns from $1\frac{1}{2}$ anna to $2\frac{1}{2}$ annas per diem. The agricultural labourer receives his wages in grain, generally from three to four seers, *plus* a midday meal.

The prices of food-grains in the Durbhunga district have been surprisingly cheap. It will be convenient to take from Mr. MacDonnell's report the average of 1868-72 exhibited in contrast with the prices of

the present year. Taking a dear month like November and December the prices were as follow:—

							1868-72.	1875-76.
<i>Sudder—</i>								
Rice ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	20·2	18
Indian corn	...	...	...	...	...	...	34·2	29·7
Wheat	...	...	...	...	...	...	20·6	22·2
<i>Mudhoobunnee—</i>								
Common rice	...	...	...	...	...	...	28·0	17·0
Indian corn	...	...	...	...	...	...	26	25
Pulses	...	...	...	...	...	...	20	...
Wheat	...	...	...	...	...	...	16	20
Millet	...	...	...	...	...	...	30	.....
<i>Tajpore—</i>								
Common rice	...	...	...	...	...	...	19·6	25
Indian corn	...	...	...	...	...	...	32	30·5
Pulses	...	...	...	...	...	...	18·6	...
							18·2	21

The greatest difference was in common rice. This was dear throughout the year. At Durbhunga it was dearest in March, July, and October; in Mudhoobunnee, in August and November; but at no time did the prices fall below 17·15 seers.

As a contrast, the Patna rates may be quoted, which were for wheat from 22 to 30 seers throughout the year; barley, from 31 to 50 seers; rice, from 18 to 25; Indian corn, from 27 to 40 seers; gram, from 30 to 34 seers. Throughout the Patna district grain was cheap and plentiful.

The ordinary prices for wheat and rice in Mozufferpore were as follow:—

				Sub-division Hr.,epore.		Sub-division Seetamurhee.		Sub-division Mozufferpore.	
MONTHS.				Rice.	Wheat.	Rice.	Wheat.	Rice.	Wheat.
				Srs.	Srs.	Srs.	Srs.	Srs.	Srs.
April	1875	...	...	19½	18	20	14½	14	15·3
May	"	...	...	18	21	30	26½	16	21
June	"	...	...	17½	22½	26	26½	15	20 1
July	"	...	...	16	23½	20	21½	14·1	20
August	"	...	...	16	21	15½	19½	14·1	20
September	"	...	...	16	24	15½	20	15·1	20
October	"	...	...	16	25	21½	20	14·1	20
November	"	...	...	15	23	22½	23½	17	20·1
December	"	...	...	15	23	22½	24½	18	21
January	1876	...	...	17	25	22½	20	20	22
February	"	...	...	18	22	21½	20	18 1	21·1
March	"	...	...	20	25	20½	20	16·1	19

The abnormally low rates of maize and barley which prevailed from December to March were caused entirely by the enormous importations of grain from Nepal, Sarun, and Chumparun. In October grain became dear, and large quantities of maize were bought up by the grain-dealers of Mozufferpore at 28 seers per rupee. At the end of March last it was calculated that the total quantity of grain and root crops imported into Seetamurhee since September was not less than four lakhs of maunds. For the whole season it is probable that importations reached the high total of nine or ten lakhs of maunds. With regard to prices it is worthy of remark that though grain has gradually got

dearer, it never fell by a single seer after the *aughami* harvest was reaped, notwithstanding that there was a total stagnation of the usual export trade, and that other food-grains were so extraordinarily cheap.

The Lieutenant-Governor regards with complete satisfaction the manner in which private trade has this year supplied the markets. It is doubtless the case that the railway has facilitated trade, and has forced holders of stock in Nepal to sell or lose their market. The lesson taught by the present year has been this, that given facilities of communication, private trade will supply any ordinary deficiency of food-supplies.

The following is a comparative statement of prices drawn up for the Shahabad district:—

MONTH.	RICE.		BARLEY.		INDIAN CORN.		REMARKS.
	1874-75.	1875-76.	1874-75.	1875-76.	1874-75.	1875-76.	
April ...	12	18	20	28	12	25	There was a similar variation in the price of other grain and a variation at the different sub-divisions. The extraordinary fall in prices is attributed to the absolute certainty of a return from canal water and the very large return from irrigation. The prices are instructive. The Collector reports:—"Personally I have never seen such winter crops as the lands bore which were freely irrigated by canal water."
May ...	11	17½	18	30	17½	25	
June ...	11	17½	18½	30	17½	25	
July ...	12	19	19	29	17½	25	
August ...	11½	18	18	30	17½	25½	
September ...	11½	19	20	30	20	28	
October ...	11½	16½	19½	34	19	32	
November ...	16	20	20	32	22½	32	
December ...	20	18	22	32	25	32	
January ...	19	21	22	33	21	33	
February ...	17	23	19½	35	23	35	
March ...	19	23	21	35	23	40	

The year opened in the Bhagulpore Division also with bright prospects and plentiful harvests, but the good promise with which the season began was not fulfilled. The rainfall, generally speaking, was scanty, and came to an abrupt termination. There was anxiety about the failure of the crops; but fortunately, except in parts of the Soopool sub-division of Bhagulpore, the failure was not considerable. In Purneah the failure was not so great as has been expected. In Monghyr the general outturn of rice was about an average crop. In South Bhagulpore the crops were little, if anything, below the average, and the cold weather or rubbee crop was at least an average one all over the district. The Sonthal Pergunnahs did not suffer. Regarding these pergunnahs the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Boxwell, writes:—"I think this district is safe against any but extreme drought. The *bhadoi* is nearly always good; the *aughami* rice is mainly grown in hollows where moisture lasts longest; irrigation is easy, cheap, and customary, and the population thin." The Commissioner adds that these remarks are applicable to that portion of the Bhagulpore and Monghyr districts which lies on the south of the Ganges. There the deficiency on account of short rainfall is made up also by irrigation works which are kept up by landholders to ensure the realization of their rents.

In Soopool sub-division the winter rice harvest was a failure, but even here the tract where the crops were wholly destroyed was limited to an extent not exceeding ten to twenty miles in depth below the Nepal frontier. From October last this sub-division was divided into beats, each placed under a Sub-Deputy Collector or Canoongo, whose duty it was to travel over his circle and look out for and notify any signs

of distress. At the same time zemindars were called upon to assist their own people; the Durbhunga Raj, which is under the administration of the Court of Wards, setting an example in this respect. During March the Durbhunga Court of Wards was giving charitable relief to some 350 persons, and had opened several works upon the Narridigur estate; one or two tanks had also been commenced by private individuals. The daily average of the seven months from February to August shows a number of persons receiving charitable relief from the Durbhunga Raj amounting to 263 persons. The daily average number of persons employed upon relief works was 3,682. The total cost of relief works in Narridigur debitable to the Court of Wards was Rs. 53,387. At no period has the distress been such as to create special alarm or uneasiness, and in all cases where distress was manifest it has been promptly relieved. The price of grain, it is reported, has been moderate in consequence of the large influx of food into the affected area and into the neighbouring district of Tirhoot.

The prices of all food-grains in the Division were indeed generally easy, and strange to say easier than in years of better rainfall and more bountiful crops. Even at Soopool, where it was naturally expected that the partial failure of the late rice would result in raising the prices of food-grains to a large extent, the prices were not very high. In 1874-75 the price of Indian corn ranged from 15 seers to 30 seers the rupee, while during 1875-76 it has ranged from 37 seers to 60 seers. In 1874-75 the price of mowah ranged from 30 seers to 60 seers, while during 1875-76 it ranged from 65 to 100. "Prices," the Collector of Monghyr observes, "have been very easy during the year, and indeed some articles of food have generally been very favourable. There was a large yield of sweet potatoes in the Begooserai sub-division, and I found them selling at 2½ maunds per rupee. Fish is always cheap." He goes on to remark:—"Milk is wonderfully cheap, so that a man can live very fairly for about Rs. 2 per mensem. A poor man can probably live cheaper and better here than in any other part of the world." Further on he remarks:—"As I write (March 3rd) the price of food appears to be lower than it has been for years, notwithstanding that no rain has fallen for five months." The same officer thus accounts for the unusual cheapness of food in the Monghyr district, and his remarks apply more or less to the other districts of the Division, specially Bhagulpore. He says:—"On inquiring the cause of this cheapness, it appears that there is very little drain towards other parts of the country. A good harvest in Bengal has apparently overstocked the Calcutta market, to which place the Monghyr surplus grain generally flows."

In Bhagulpore the prevailing rates of wages are as follow:—

Unskilled Labour per Day.

	As.	P.		As.	P.		As.	P.		As.	P.
Men	...	1	6	to	2	6	Boys	...	1	0	to 1 6
Women	...	1	8				Girls	...	0	9	

Skilled Labour per Day.

Carpenters and blacksmiths	...	...	...	3 to 5 annas.
Masons...	...	...	...	Ditto.

... was local, and
... prosperous throughout
... alt showers in April and May
... golden rains' of September and
October matured a magnificent crop of rice. The succeeding months
were rainless, and therefore unfavourable to the cultivation of the cold-
weather crops. Prices were remarkably steady throughout the year,
and the average rates prevailing vary very immaterially from those
current last season. There have, however, been local fluctuations.

Scarcity in Bengal in 1874, and an extensive exportation to
Calcutta, raised the price of rice in Balasore district in that year. In
1874-75 the quantity of rice exported by sea was 10,41,168 maunds,
and its value, as declared by the shippers, averaged Re. 1-10 per maund.
During 1874-75 the average retail prices of rice in bazars were in
the sudder sub-division 23½ seers per rupee, and in the Bhuddruck
sub-division 31½ seers per rupee. With the cessation of scarcity,
however, a very great fall in the value of rice took place. During
1875-76 the quantity of rice exported by sea was 8,15,318 maunds,
and its average value per maund was only Re. 1-6. Retail prices have
declined in a corresponding ratio. In 1875-76 the average retail price
of rice in Balasore sudder sub-division has been 28 seers per rupee,
and in the Bhuddruck sub-division 38 seers

In Cuttack the selling price of ordinary rice was moderate through-
out the year. In Jajpore the average rate was 32 seers 3 chittacks per
rupee, in Kendrapara it was 38 seers 12 chittacks, and in Cuttack 25
seers 14 chittacks, giving an average for the whole district of 30 seers
9½ chittacks, against 26 seers 1 chittack last year. The circumstances
of Cuttack city, out off as it is by rivers, are peculiar, and the prices
ruling there are often abnormally high. There is a large population
of about 50,000 to be fed, the majority of whom, not being producers
of grain, have to buy in the markets. The highest rate prevailing
was in August, when rice sold for 19 seers 5 chittacks in Cuttack;
the lowest was in December, when it sold for 31 seers 8 chittacks.
Compared with other large towns in Bengal, where a non-producing
population is collected in a small area, these rates are very moderate.
In Kendrapara sub-division the average price of rice has been 38 seers
10 chittacks per rupee, in Jajpore 31 seers 12 chittacks, and in Cuttack
city 26 seers 1 chittack per rupee.

In the Pooree district prices averaged 25-2 seers per rupee this
year, against 25-9 seers last year, and there has been very little
difference in the prices ruling in Pooree town and in Khoordah
sub-division.

Rice, the main staple of the country, was everywhere dearest in
July and August. The highest price reached during the year was
19 seers 5 chittacks, in Cuttack town; and the lowest, 37 seers, in
Kendrapara sub-division of Cuttack, and 48 seers in Bhuddruck sub-
division of Balasore. At no time of the year was rice below 36 seers per
rupee in Bhuddruck.

population is not sufficient.

to render them independent of further

the assistance and sympathy of the labouring population.

It may be generally said that no

do a day's work so long as he has a day's food

the Commissioner reports that some difficulty was

obtaining adequate supply of labour for canal works.

Orissa has now had a favourable harvest of rice for several

years in succession, and the export trade in rice, which is supplemented

by an importation of piece-goods and other necessities, is rapidly

expanding. The circumstances of the people are, in consequence

undoubtedly improving year by year. It is stated that earthenware

has been almost completely replaced by brass as material for domestic

utensils; that the stock of metal ornaments worn by the women and

children is evidently increasing; that the wages of skilled labour of all

kinds are rising; that the consumption of salt grows larger, and that

each year shows also a rapidly increasing expenditure upon opium, the

favourite luxury of the people. All these are symptoms of growing

prosperity. Moreover, a good harvest is more profitable to the peasant

now than formerly. Now he can sell all his produce at a good price;

whereas formerly a good harvest sent down the prices, and his produce

realized comparatively little. The only persons who suffer are those

residents of towns who live on a fixed income. These are naturally

disappointed that excellent harvests do not result in greater cheapness

of rice, and perceiving that the cause lay in the briskness of export,

are said to have complained bitterly against the merchants. But the

fact that the cultivators have been able to obtain a fair and remuner-

ative price for their produce is precisely the most encouraging fact that

can be cited in relation to the material progress of the province.

Improvement in communications has yielded this result, that plentiful

harvests, which formerly to a great extent glutted the markets with

an unsaleable commodity, now add at the same time to the wealth of

the district and to the general resources of the country. The Lieu-

tenant-Governor notices that the Pooree district has less trade than

Balasore or Cuttack, and that material improvement is less marked in

Pooree than in other parts of Orissa.

The rainfall in Hazareebagh was insufficient. It was very scanty

in September and October, and there was no

rain at all from November to the close of the

year. The outturn of the several harvests was

consequently somewhat below the average of an ordinary

The district of Lohardugga may be divided

divisions, viz. the sudder sub-division or Chota Nagpur

the Palamow sub-division. In the first the agricultural

above the average; the outturn of all sorts of crops,

of the rubber, was very good; the rainfall was average.

